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COVER PICTURE GRACE PENNEY AND STUDENTS FROM KATHMANDU

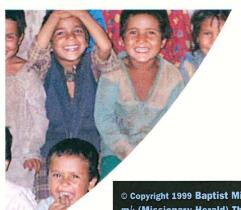
INTERNATIONAL STUDY CENTRE DESIGN SARAH PRENTICE

mb January / February 1999









© Copyright 1999 Baptist Missionary Society ISSN 0264-1372 $\mathbf{m}h$ (Missionary Herald) The magazine of the Baptist Missionary Society

Addres Telephor here's a mentality that pervades in some Christian circles that training and equipping oneself for serving God more effectively is something that should be done prayerfully, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. And nothing else.

It's quite often the same people thinking this thought who sign up for evening classes; go on training courses at work so they can do their jobs better; buy cassettes to learn another language; read all about their hobbies in as many magazines as possible; watch TV to learn the latest information on their chosen topic; and listen to educational tapes in the car.

Strange, isn't it?

The Bible speaks about our transformation, by the renewing of our minds (Rom 12:2), and urges us to discover our spiritual gifting, so that we might become mature in Christ (Eph 4:13).

It is a testimony of many people that coming to faith in Christ gave them a new lease of life in terms of their learning capacity. Suddenly they were hungry, not only for God, but also to improve themselves educationally as well. And, with the help of the renewing power of the Holy Spirit, they could do it!

BMS personnel have found God working miracles in their lives: those who flunked languages at school were learning new ones, and finding they could learn and speak them. Others have developed new skills at a time of life, when that was the last thing they thought they'd be doing – until they discovered God had other ideas!

This issue is looking at education and lifelong training for mission. I hope you learn something as you read through the magazine.

At the beginning of this new year, we welcome Steve Flashman, Vinoth Ramachandra, and Dik Lapine as regular contributors. We're constantly aiming to improve $\mathbf{m}h$, and make it a challenging read. We know the contributions from these folk will help us achieve our aim.

We hope you like the free 1999 wallchart that comes to you with this issue. It will help you make every mh delivery day a red letter day!

With best wishes



World



Christians were interrogated and 'expelled for life'.

At the same time between 30 and 50 Maldivians, suspected of being Christians, were arrested, interrogated and imprisoned. It is thought they are being held captive in the notorious Dhoonidhoo political prison, where they are being



CHRISTIAN SOLIDARITY WORLDWIDE

Maldives Christians jailed and deported

All known Maldivian Christians and those suspected of having Christian beliefs have been rounded up and thrown into prison. Foreign believers have been deported in an attempt to prevent the spread of the gospel.

Last year the National Security Service swooped unannounced on foreign workers' homes, seizing passports, computers and Christian literature which had been brought into the country legally.

Up to 19 foreign



tortured and kept in solitary confinement.

The Maldives have been Sunni Muslim for 800 years, and it is illegal to be anything other than a Muslim.

After the arrests
President Maumoon Abdul
Gayoom accused Christian
missionaries of deception.
He called on every citizen to
maintain national stability by
standing against "evil plans
made to play with hearts and
minds".

The Maldives occupy over 1,000 coral islands in the Indian Ocean, south west of Sri Lanka. They are described as 'paradise islands' for Western tourists.

news

Only 200 of the islands are inhabited, with a population of around a quarter of a million people. (CSW/Open Doors)

Indonesia Enemies become friends

family's food for one week:
rice, cooking oil, sugar,
noodles and milk powder.
Each box is signed 'The Gift
From Singaporean
Christians'.
Project Bless Indonesia
executive director Andy

Each package contains a

Project Bless Indonesia executive director Andy Budi Janto Sutedja said, "Many pastors say they have received a great response from non-Christian

communities
around them –
some from
people who
formerly were
against them,
breaking
windows and
burning
churches. In
another part the

tribes are more open to working with Christians as a result of this effort. They used to be



Muslim communities, previously hostile to Christians, have responded positively to unexpected relief shipments.

Around 25 tons of food, paid for by churches in Singapore, have been delivered to villages

around Jakarta to help those worst hit by the drought and economic crisis that have created desperate shortages in the country.

These were the first deliveries in what is hoped to be a two-year commitment by Singaporean Christians. The supplies are purchased in Indonesia. very resistant; some of our workers were even almost killed a few years ago."

"There was a lot of need, and it's important for Christians to show the true love of God when people are in crisis," said Derek Hong, pastor of one of the participating churches in Singapore. (YWAM News)

Turkey

A four year-old boy was killed and 25 others injured when a Christian bookstall at Gaziantep's crowded trade fair was the target of a senseless bomb attack. The stand was operated by Good News Publishing Company and was selling Bibles, Christian books and tapes in the Turkish language. The attack was publicly condemned by both the Turkish President and Prime Minister, and the man responsible has been given a life sentence in prison. (Open Doors)

Pakistan

An attempt has been made by Pakistan's Prime Minister, Nawaz Sharif, to do away with the country's civil laws and replace them with Islamic law. According to Christians, this proposed amendment would restrict their religious freedom even further, and subject them to more persecution. It would mean that every citizen would be forced to observe Islamic prayers five times a day. (Open Doors)

India

Following the election of the Hindu Nationalist Party in India, Christians — and especially Baptists — have come under pressure in North East India from anti-Christian groups, who accuse them of helping underground guerilla movements to destabilise the area. This area has a history of conflict, both tribal, and with the government of India for autonomy. One report says that churches have been destroyed, Bibles torn and set on fire. Christians have been beaten and put in jail. (BWA)

Tanzania

The Baptist Convention of Tanzania has set itself a target of sending 50 missionaries internally and eight missionaries to neighbouring countries by the year 2007. The new goals have been adopted by the Convention to strengthen its mission and ministry. They also wish to strengthen Sunday Schools, encourage Bible studies and train qualified religious educators. They hope to establish a department to co-ordinate these efforts. (BWA)

Albania



Four leaders of congregations met recently at the European Baptist Federation meeting in Kiev, to discuss plans for organising a Baptist Union in Albania. Those involved were Saverio Guarna (BMS), Adnan Pula (Baptist elder), Jonathan Steeper (Canadian Baptist missionary), and Alfred 'Freddy' Golloshi (co-paster in Baptist church). (EBPS)



India **New AIDS** ministry in **Madras**

The increase in AIDS in India has created a new grouping in the country's caste system: with HIV carriers being shunned by relatives.

An adoption programme for AIDS patients has begun in Madras by workers with Youth With A Mission (YWAM), and through it,



see

this new group of 'outcasts' is finding acceptance and hope.

Madras is a city of seven million people, and the number of cases of AIDS has risen significantly in the past few years, largely through sexual contact and drug use.

Volunteer workers get

free access to the two main hospitals in Madras, bringing in food and other supplies for the patients.

When patients are discharged they are put in touch with volunteers from a church in their home area who take on a support role. Tim Svoboda, who heads up YWAM's work in Madras, says: "AIDS isn't well understood oftentimes, so when people are diagnosed they can be rejected by their families. People are afraid that they can contract AIDS through everyday contact with people, and there is a great deal of shame associated with the disease."

It is reported that one man disappeared on learning that his wife was HIV positive, leaving her alone in hospital.

Deva Wilson Prabu, who heads up the AIDS ministry comments: "It's still early days, but we have seen considerable impact already. We have seen people welcomed back by their families, and also some real openness to the gospel." (YWAM News)

Mongolia **Blind missionary** helps others

With a cane and the help of a Mongolian Christian friend, 27-yearold Marta Sloan - who has been blind for more than half her life - is a familiar sight around the Mongolian capital, Ulaan Baatar, where she teaches English to blind students aged nine to 60.

As well as teaching a new language, Sloan also wants to encourage her class to



more room should be made for handicapped people who want to serve God full-time.

"There's not a single person that God can't use in some way," she said. "It is

> not only handicapped people who sometimes feel they can't be used. Others may feel disqualified because of something that has happened to them, or an experience they have had, but we all have something to offer." (YWAM News)

learn that being disabled does not disqualify them from life. "Very few blind Mongolians work, or even believe they have the ability to because of the way society has traditionally viewed the handicapped," she said.

She is undaunted about living in a city that knows nothing about access aids for disabled people. Nor is she concerned about being overseas in a situation where many sighted single women would think twice. "My friend knows where it is safe to be," she says, "and as a foreigner I am less of a target. But the most important security comes from knowing that God wants me to be here."

She felt God calling her to become a missionary from the age of 12, a year before she lost her sight. From that

time she applied herself to preparing for service, and



gained a degree in intercultural studies. She believes

Holland New flower power hits **Amsterdam**

Christians who wanted to share their faith at an



Holland

international homosexual festival chose to hand out flowers

rather than point fingers.

Five thousand yellow roses with a note proclaiming God's love were presented to spectators and tourists at the Gay Games in Amsterdam, which drew an estimated 100,000 people to the city.



YWAM

Nearly 100 Christians from eight countries took part in the three-week outreach. Initially the organisers confessed to being 'a little nervous' about the way they might be received as they witnessed in different parts of the city.

"Since our focus was not so much homosexuals or the issue as such, but more on people and the good news that they are cared for and deeply loved, we did not get any aggression. If anything there was more surprise from the gay people we met," said Nellie Bosshardt, who helped lead the programme.

She added, "we believe that a homosexual lifestyle is not God's intention, but we weren't evangelising to communicate a certain view on homosexuality."

Those involved in the outreach played music and presented dances at key venues across the city. They also ran a coffee bar and offered free shoe-cleaning outside Amsterdam's Central Station.

One lesbian couple were given a card in one of the city's main parks. Even before they read the card, they asked, "Does it say that lesbians go to hell?" The 67-year-old Canadian outreach member stood between them, and replied,

"No, it says that God loves you."

Some 20 people made commitments to Christ during the outreach, though none from gay backgrounds. "Many people, among whom were a great number of homosexuals, perhaps for the first time in their life saw and received something positive from believers," said Bosshardt.

"The impact of the event will go far beyond Amsterdam," she added.
"Our eyes were opened for the possibilities and the necessity. As a Church we have in a way ignored this group of people, and wrongly so." (YWAM News)

Central Asia Closed countries: open hearts



PANOS PICTURE

People living in Central Asia face many difficulties: civil war, economic instability, and harsh religious laws. In some republics Christians risk arrest, interrogation and fines when they meet together.

Nevertheless it is reported that the number of Christians in Central



Kiev in Ukraine is one of the world's most beautiful cities. The river drifts lazily through its heart, the landscape rises and falls, and the old part has buildings so magnificent you want to stand and stare. Art galleries, memorials, churches – wonderful tributes to people's artistic and architectural skills.

The awesome St Andrew's Church (above) sits on the crest of a hill, its classic orthodox lines decked with gold edging and its crosses proclaiming a faith that Soviet domination could not suppress. I worshipped in the Central Baptist Church. I was deeply moved by the commitment of young and old, and their deep desire that others should know their Christ.

So, faith was not erased by a communist regime. But, if I'm scared for them, it's the challenge to faith that western secularism now brings. Big corporations are pouring into countries like Ukraine. The picture (above) has St Andrew's church in the distance, but the foreground is dominated by McDonald's and to the right is an enormous Nescafe advert across the whole side of a neighbouring building. McDonald's – or, the American Embassy as some called it – looks deserted, but it was busy inside and on weekend evenings it's overrun by young people. The dress code is Levi jeans, Reebok trainers and Nike t-shirts. They occupy every table inside and out, ordering Big Macs and Coke (same words in Ukrainian).

Will westernisation change them? Yes. Is it a rival to the simpler values of their parents? Of course. These kids have choices their parents never had. They're poor, but they aspire for everything this world offers. Being cool includes Big Macs and Levi jeans. It doesn't easily include beautiful choir singing and three hour church services.

Secularism won't be resisted in Ukraine any more than it has been here. Will its march be matched by the march of the gospel? I hope so. For the sake of a new generation, I hope so. ●

Alistair Brown is General Director of BMS



world news



Asia is growing. Less than a decade ago, there was only "a handful" according to FEBA's development manager for the region, John Sutor,; "now there are several thousand."

Currently radio

programmes are produced in two Central Asian languages for broadcasting on a medium wave transmitter. There are plans to add three



more languages in the next two years. Cassettes and videos are also used to help in a teaching ministry, for a church that is growing rapidly without trained teachers or pastors.

Ethnic Central Asian Christian music is also regarded as an essential element in the radio programmes.

"I don't think that it's a coincidence that in some of these countries, the newly emerging churches have gifted musicians and song-writers in their midst" he commented. (FEBA Radio News)

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action





Clean Water

Planet Earth has very little fresh water and as human populations continue to grow, the fresh water is decreasing on a per capita basis. More than a billion people face the problem of how to acquire fresh water every day of their lives.

A person who has food to eat needs to drink at least one litre of water a day simply to stay alive. A person who is short of food needs to drink much more water. But it is often shortage of water which causes shortage of food because water is the essential requirement for food production.

No water, no food.

Most developing countries which are condemned to shortage of water are also condemned to the use of dirty water. More than four million children die every year from diarrhoea caused by water-borne infections.

"The number of water taps per thousand persons will become a better indicator of health than the number of hospital beds". Halfdan Mahler, former Director of WHO.

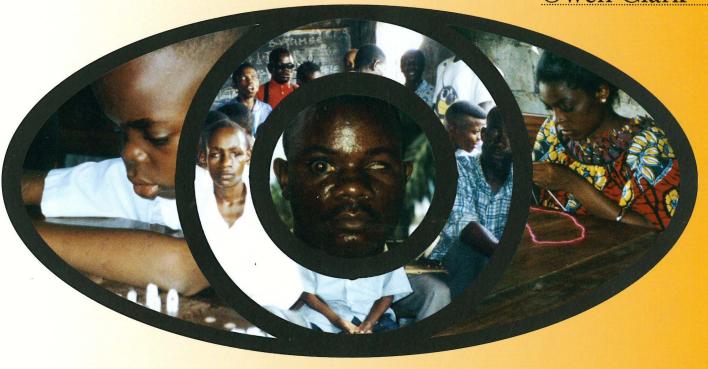
It is vital to encourage clean water projects, especially those which work through communities in the developing world, so that local wisdom and tradition may be taken into account.

The Church of the Province of Kenya works through local communities to build rain-water catchment dams and tanks, especially in the arid lands. Work camps involve members of the church and the local community. Volunteers from Christians Aware often share in the camps, keep in touch with the people and see the difference clean water makes.

Send a card of encouragement (43p stamp) to Rt Revd Alfred Chipman at the Diocese of Mount Kenya West, PO Box 229, Nyeri, Kenva. ●

BMS, Baptist Union, Christians Aware, Church of Scotland, Methodist Church, United Reformed Church

Owen Clark



man of vision

OWEN CLARK

BEGINS A NEW SERIES ON PRESENT AND FUTURE CHURCH LEADERSHIP IN THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO (FORMERLY ZAIRE)

e's not really blind, is he?" One parent nudged another. "I mean, you can't run a school if you're blind, can you?"

Mola, who really is blind, had invited parents and friends to the blind school he runs at the Lisala church in Kinshasa - some fifteen youngsters on the books, and one or two adults. Smartly dressed in suit and tie, he read his speech of welcome in confident manner, running his fingers across the stiff paper.

"No," said the other. "He must be

able to see a bit. Besides, how could he possibly get around Kinshasa the way he does?"

Mola is used to people saying things about him as though he were deaf as

that's a young man of vision

well as blind. In the street someone will say, "What a terrible shame to see such a fine, young man, blind!" His response is, "Don't feel sorry for me! God cares for me, and Jesus Christ is my Saviour. If you can't say as much you need to feel sorry for yourself!"

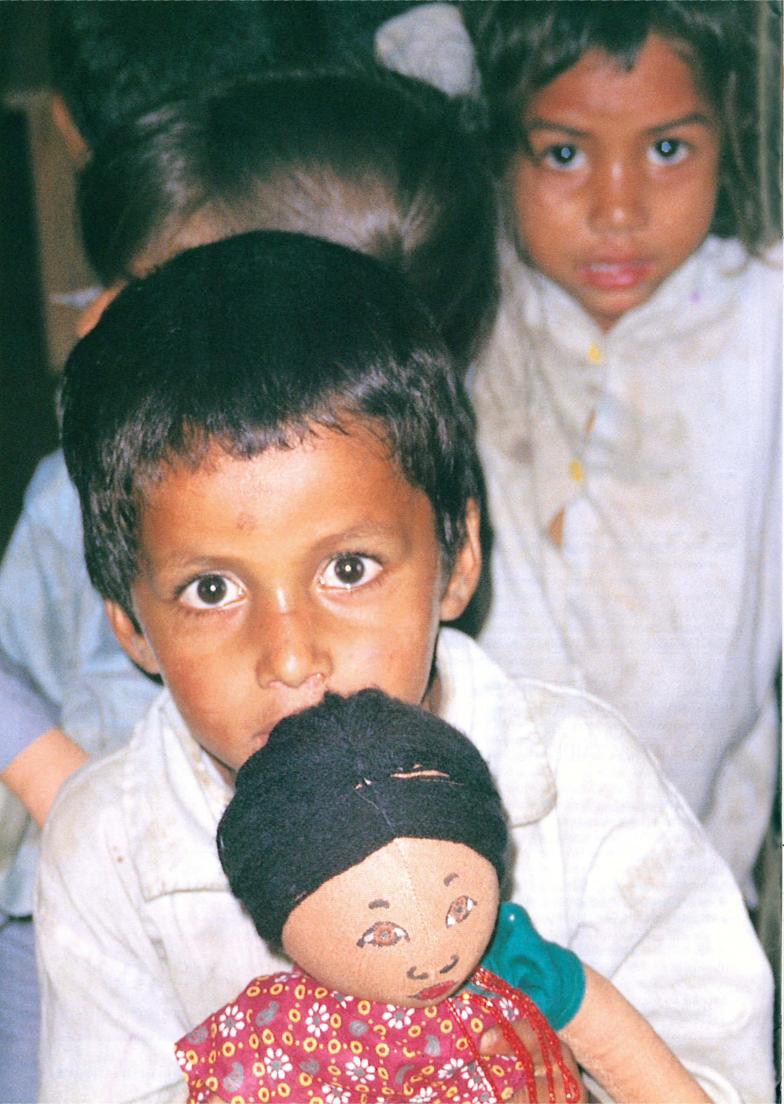
His attitude was not always so positive. As children at Ntondo, both Mola and his sister had an eye condition, but whereas a doctor saved his sister's sight, Mola went blind. He became angry and bitter. With God. "Why me? Why has God allowed me to go blind?" he demanded. Mola heard the gospel at church and in school, and in response gave his heart to Christ. In need of encouragement, he also became

an encourager of others.

In his teens Mola was helped to get to Kinshasa and attended a school for the blind. There he learnt Braille and other skills. Continuing his general education, he eventually got his State Diploma. All the while his faith and understanding had grown. In spite of blindness God had been good to him.

Mola felt that it was now up to him to help other blind folk - encourage them out of their dark corners, help family and society to appreciate their potential, teach them what he had learnt, help them integrate in the church and the world. In faith, with no resources, he started the school, with two other teachers, one blind, to help

There are other things he'd like to do – carry on studying, marry his fiancée, a sighted girl, who accepted him against her family's wishes - but for the moment he says, "I can now see why God allowed me to go blind - so that he could better use me to bring hope to the blind." That's a young man of vision. Owen Clark is a church worker with BMS in the Democratic Republic of Congo.



when grown men played

CORINNA WOODS TELLS OF A DARING EXPERIMENT IN EDUCATION

he country of Nepal re-opened its borders to the outside world in 1951 after a century of isolation. Nepal's education system dates back to this time, and it is to the country's credit that there is a primary school building of sorts in almost every village.

During the two years that I worked in a remote village in west Nepal, I observed almost complete educational poverty. Schools have buildings, but they are leaky, and mud-floored, with no door in doorways, or securable windows. They are given one teacher for every 50 enrolled pupils. There is rarely any furniture and no books, toys, drawing materials or PE equipment.

Teachers are only required to have a school leaving certificate (SLC), easily obtained by cheating, and someone to pull strings to get them their job. The teachers only teach for four out of seven periods each day, leaving children unoccupied for up to two-thirds of the school day. As they teach by subject rather than class teaching, they never get to know their pupils.

My assignment was to assess the quality of primary education and to find ways of helping the local community to introduce change. I quickly realised that geographical isolation meant that most people had never left their local area to see or experience anything different in schools, and this led to a cycle of poor teaching producing poorly educated teachers. Despite the excellence of a new curriculum being introduced,

government training tended to be all theory. So I organised a tour to Kathmandu for the education students so they could see what good schools looked like. The students marvelled at ten-year-old children in the British school doing "harder work than our SLC", and having never seen outdoor play equipment spent a break-time sliding down the slide! (They were aged between 18 and 30!)

Building on this I was able to use my influence as "external examiner" to set up teaching practice on western

"No one has ever helped us like this before. We're so enjoying this!"

lines, insisting on class teaching and full-time presence in the classroom. The results were encouraging; children came to school regularly, and made real progress, even in one month. But the teachers felt threatened by this demonstration and wanted nothing to do with it. I, however, felt confirmed in my diagnosis that subject teaching was the root of the failing system, and offered to help the primary school introduce class teaching.

Two schools responded, and for three months the two designated class 1 teachers worked at my home on their free afternoon, making simple teaching aids: flashcards, puzzles, matching games etc. They said one day, "No one has ever helped us like this before. We're so enjoying this!" We invited the local chairmen of the Village Development Committees to tea, to ask for funds for furniture and were well received, so we ordered proper tables and small benches, a lockable cupboard and new doors for each room

from a local carpenter.

I spent alternate days with these classes showing the teachers how to organise their time to include written work as well as talking; how to invite answers from the children instead of telling them everything; how to use books, toys, paint and scissors, and how to do PE and read to the children – every activity a new experience.

One sometimes frustrating aspect of the programme was the community interest – faces of men and women, boys and girls constantly peering through the windows to see what was going on and often asking "Show us the people" – the two rag dolls dressed as Nepali man and woman which were easily the favourite toys. I shan't easily forget wrinkled, old grannies standing holding with grinning delight the first dolls they had ever seen.

It became a regular routine for other teachers to arrive hesitantly in the classroom at lunch time to read the books and play with the toys. These were men of some standing locally doing puzzles, fitting shapes in sorting boxes with difficulty, and reading story books for the first time in their lives. During a class session one teacher sat with the children reading a small christian picture book, one of several I had added to the rat-proof tin trunk of books, the story of the crucifixion. He appeared angry and I thought was about to object to christian material being placed in his classroom – but no. He brought the book to me and said, "What terrible things they did to your Jesus. Where can I find out more about him?"

My prayer is that these two teachers will be able to maintain their new style of teaching. Also that the practical example of christian lives, lived among them may bear fruit, so that these people, too, may long to serve in the name and spirit of Jesus Christ. Corinna Woods spent seven years in Nepal as a BMS missionary and teacher.

education

'm often reminded what a 'different' experience it is to teach geography to missionary children here in Nepal. For example, a field trip never fails to attract the attention of the locals, whether it's a traffic survey on one of Kathmandu's busy streets, or a river study out in the country. The children are used to local people peering over their shoulders at their clipboards, almost to the point where they can't see what they are writing! It always amuses me to observe the look of the villagers' faces as students measure the speed of flow of a stream by timing how long it takes a lemon to travel a given distance downstream. There is a puzzled expression

the United Mission to Nepal and the International Nepal Fellowship, for the education of missionary children. Today, as space permits, KISC also welcomes the children of other expatriates working in Nepal and seeks to provide an education in a christian environment. An international school, it provides boarding and day school for children aged 11 to 18 years. At present there are 90 students coming from many countries such as USA, Australia, Bangladesh, Germany, UK, Canada, Netherlands, India, Norway and Nepal. Students take IGCSE exams and Advanced International Certificate of Education. Maximum class size is 20.

Lyndsay and Kirsty McLellan of BMS also attend KISC. Lyndsay is in Year 9 and Kirsty is in Year 7. Both are going to be taking part in the school musical, Annie.

The longer I've worked at KISC, the more I have realised what a vital role it has in 'mission' work. At times I have been tempted to think that, in a country with such obvious need, I would be more useful working more directly with Nepali people. What good am I being to Nepal teaching geography to expatriate children? It is often implied that the education of missionaries children is not 'real' missionary work. People find it harder to give their money, time and prayer to



which says, "Foreigners ARE strange. We always expected it. We EAT lemons."

I'll never forget the day we returned from a trip close to the end of the monsoon. It was a warm, drizzly day perfect weather for leeches, (little black worms that suck your blood). Children emerged from the forest at the end of the day with feet, socks and boots covered in blood. Others had leeches drop down their T-shirts which made them look as if they had been shot. The combination of blood and rain made it all the more dramatic and, whilst the children examined their bodies almost with glee, I reflected on what the reaction of parents in the UK might be if I returned their offspring in this state after a school trip!

I've been teaching at Kathmandu International Study Centre (KISC), for four years. Previously I taught geography in a secondary school in Norfolk and worked as an instructor of outdoor activities and environmental studies in Snowdonia and Cheshire.

The school was founded in 1987 by

Students have the opportunity to go trekking, to explore the Kathmandu valley, to visit UMN/INF projects and to do rock climbing, gorge scrambling, mountain biking and sleeping out on hill tops. Field trips to study art, language and geography are regular features in a typical term.

Susan, Joon, Lyndsay and Kirsty are typical of students at KISC.

Susan's dad works at a small hospital in the hills. Susan has been at KISC since Year 7 and now she is one of ten students in our new Sixth Form. She lives at the KISC boarding house. Every term she travels five hours on a bus plus four hours of walking to be reunited with her parents for the holidays.

Joon's parents work in Nepal, supported by a Korean mission. He takes his IGCSEs in May. Last year his family went to the UK for further training and he attended a school in the Midlands. He kept in touch with his friends (and his geography teacher) by e-mail and "couldn't wait to get back" to KISC!

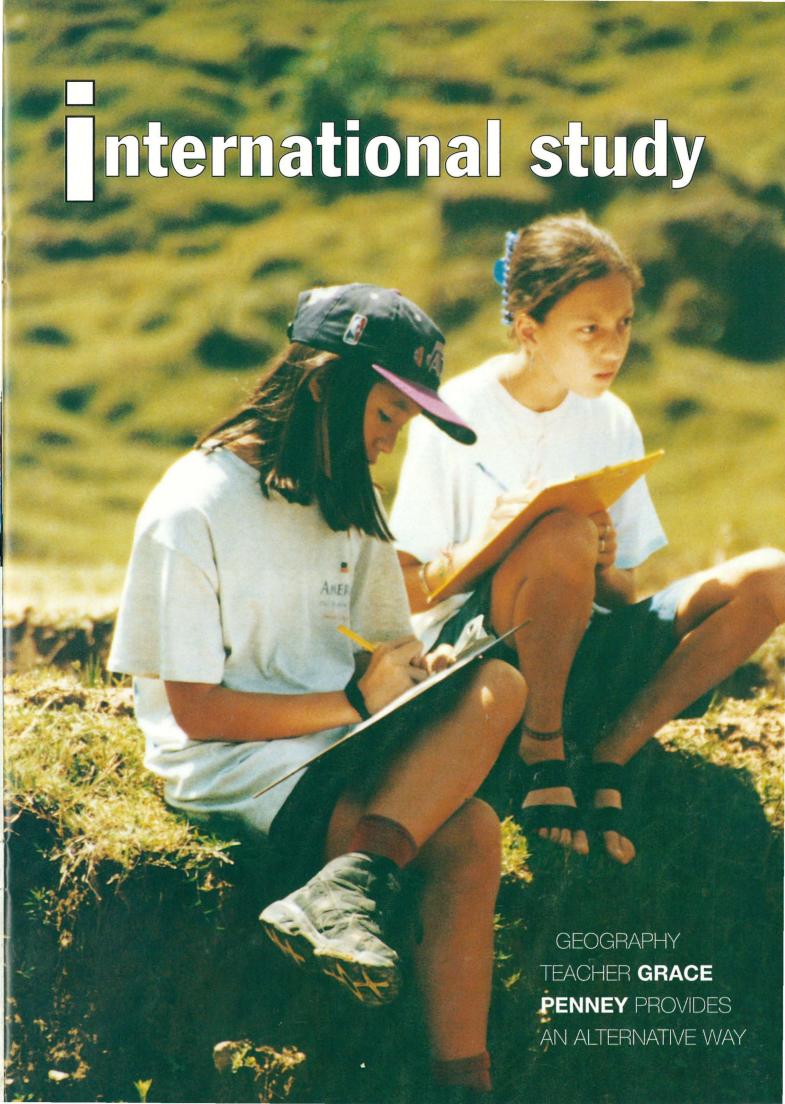
this aspect of work.

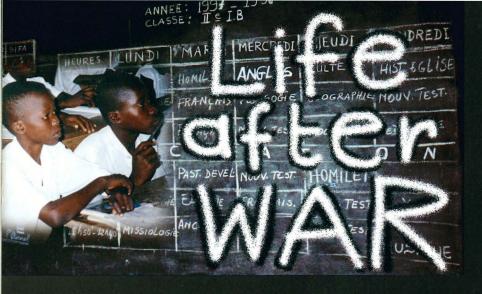
These days mission personnel are not prepared to compromise on their children's education. They want their children to have a good education in a christian environment which will prepare them academically and socially for their future studies and work. Although I have done no statistical analysis on the issue, I am certain from 'listening' that the education of children is the single most important factor influencing the length of service that mission personnel will do.

My role in providing quality education for mission children enables their parents to be involved in and committed to 'frontline' mission work as doctors, agriculturalists, engineers and educationalists. They are directly involved with the local people, but in order to be there they need this essential support.

The encouraging thing is that we all have a part to play in mission.

Grace Penney is a BMS missionary based in Kathmandu, Nepal.







PAT WOOLHOUSE

HAS JUST RETURNED
TO THE DEMOCRATIC
REPUBLIC OF CONGO.
HERE SHE RELATES
WHAT SHE FOUND
HAD HAPPENED TO
THE COUNTRY'S
SCHOOLING.

ur salary first! We're
parents too and we need to
buy uniforms and
notebooks for our
children!"

This was the general reaction when the government announced that, even though the east of the country is still at war and Kinshasa and Bas-Congo (this area) are recovering from six weeks of fighting and insecurity, the new school year was to start on 1 October. Teachers were understandably reluctant to leave their gardens, which provide a minimum of food for the family, in order to take up their chalk again without any guarantee of

money at the end of the month. In this province the situation was further complicated by the arrest of the generally popular Governor, accused of having "cooperated" with the rebels because he was forced at gun point to open the bank vaults in Matadi. The teachers' trade union representative said that work would not start until he had been liberated and restored to office.

In some families the young people had gone elsewhere for the holidays and travelling back has been complicated by a chronic shortage of money, few passenger vehicles on the road and in some cases, no identity papers. There has been so much



ission isn't something that just happens overseas.
Very often people get their mission training in their home church, and it is there they first get the bug for reaching out for God.

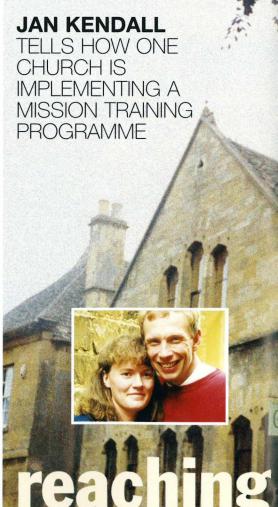
Chipping Campden Baptist Church in Gloucestershire has as its mission statement: 'to proclaim Jesus Christ to people today.' As minister Phil Deller says, they want to make Jesus relevant in today's world, to people in their community and further afield. They have renovated their old building, so that whilst it retains its aged facade, it is completely modern inside. They have a data projector which they use to invite

people to view things like the World Cup Live and other events.

Members at Chipping Campden Baptist Church have a vision for growth. Firmly believing that church planting is the way to make kingdom growth happen, they are planting a new church in the nearby town of Shipston-on-Stour.

We've got something **worth** sharing.

They are just about to start their sixth Alpha course, to which they have 50 people signed up, 20 of whom have not been to church before. The whole church had to go through the first course, to see how it worked. Then it was up to them to bring others in. As Phil Deller says, "It's developing a culture of invitation in church, so that people are not embarrassed. We've got something worth



education for life



students will be trying to study without even basic pens and notebooks



less police harassment in the last year that folk had got out of the habit of carrying their papers but in the current situation travellers are having to identify themselves at regular road blocks. 1 October was also a Thursday, and the usual hesitation about coming back to school before "someone else" (the headmaster perhaps?!) has swept and washed the classrooms is even more noticeable when the new school year starts midweek.

All this means that at the beginning of the second week in October primary and secondary schools were only opening cautiously, certainly not in full swing. Some further education had restarted. though with reduced student numbers. but other institutions were still trying to get organised. Indeed, in some places the outbreak of hostilities had called a halt to exam sessions or final lectures and when the new academic year begins some students will have to start by completing the previous year. There had been hopes that after a number of years when each institution had its own academic calendar, we were getting to the point where uniformity might be possible, but those hopes have now been dashed. Students at all levels of education will be trying to study without even basic pens and notebooks, let alone adequate uniform or

necessary fees.

Education in this country has really suffered in recent years. Unpaid teachers do not give of their best and many parents give up the struggle to find school fees for their children. The government was beginning to tackle the problem, but this war has been a great setback.

Pat Woolhouse is a teacher with BMS, working in Kimpese, DRC.





sharing. We need to restore people's confidence in the gospel."

But Chipping Campden's mission awareness does not end there. They are developing overseas

links. For a medium-sized church with a membership of 125, they are brimming with people training for mission.

They have two couples overseas with different agencies, one in Turkey and the other in Thailand. The latter work in a team, helping abused girls. Members Peter and Karen Lloyd were BMS volunteer workers in Nepal for almost a year; there's a woman in the congregation who was in Papua New Guinea for over 20 years, and still works on translating the New Testament into Gogadala, a local dialect, plus two men in training for ministry. The entire church works on its relationship with their BMS link missionaries.

In 1998 they hosted an Action Team

for the first time prior to their service overseas. The Albania Action Team went into local schools and took part in Sunday worship. The church appreciated the opportunity, and said things went "really well."

Chipping Campden Baptist Church has strong links with Ecce Homo, a welfare organisation in Romania. These links are built on relationship rather than giving aid. In 1998 eight went from Chipping Campden to visit Ecce Homo; and in 1999 some will come from Romania to the UK. Ecce Homo is a group of Christians who help poor families. They work with street children, in an orphanage, and distribute aid and welfare help in a town called Cluj Napoca.

Surely a church with a mission statement that is finding fulfilment!

Jan Kendall is BMS Editorial Co-ordinator and $m{m}b$ Editor

Main photograph Chipping Campden Baptist Church. Inset left to right: Peter and Karen Lloyd; Phil Deller; worship at Chipping Campden.



in at the deep end



RYDER ROGERS

TALKS ABOUT LEADERSHIP TRAINING IN THE ALBANIAN CHURCH

he in-laws can sometimes be right

Moses' father-in-law was. 'Do it
all on your own, son, and you'll
kill yourself'. Good advice is
worth listening to, so that thought
became a guiding principle that we
tried to follow here in Albania.

Our vision has always been to hand over, watch over, and start again somewhere else. That's why when we were suddenly evacuated we were able to leave four young people ranging from 17 to 24 years of age to carry on what we had started – two responsible for teaching, one for the prayer-life of the church and one for music and worship. Right from the beginning we talked to

Our **vision** has always been to hand over, watch over, and start again somewhere else

those who became Christians about 'serving', that is, doing what God wants with the abilities he gives.

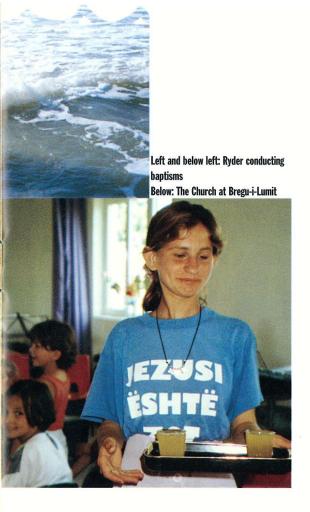
So, as soon as possible we got our

young people serving Jesus. Some with hearts of compassion worked in the church's Compassion Ministry, distributing clothing and food to the really needy. Others were taught to play musical instruments in our Worship Group. Those that felt that they had something to say about the Bible were helped to put their thoughts together for a Sunday service, or lead a Bible study. Any that had a heart for prayer were encouraged to share their concerns. Out of this 'service' we saw people emerging who showed signs of God's hand on them. So little by little we gave them space to get on and do it.

The problem with young Christians (and I don't just mean in age) is what Paul warned Timothy about – Satan's snare of self importance. Without oversight during our three months of enforced absence, two of them got bigheaded, jealous, self righteous, and wanted to rule the roost. When we returned, we had to discipline them. One accepted it and repented, the other didn't and became very hard-hearted. Sadly this division created not just ripples but waves that eighteen months later are still sloshing around.

What we suffered, other young churches also experienced. The devil's main attack is to hit the leaders hard –



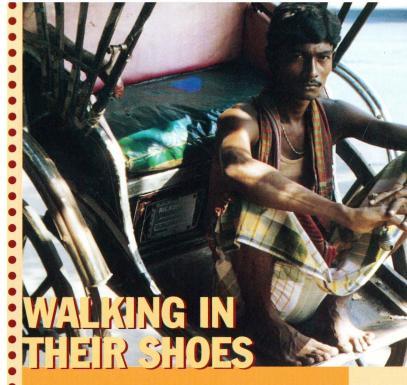


so that they fall on top of others creating a domino effect. However there are in Albania young Christians who have emerged as godly leaders, not only in their own churches, but for the evangelical community. For ourselves, in many ways, we are back to square one. Some negatively say "See, you can't leave young Christians on their own". How much that reflects the reality or missionary insecurity is open

to debate, but we are not prepared to give up the vision.

Ryder Rogers and his wife Heather are BMS missionaries involved in church planting work in Albania





STEVE FLASHMAN

hat a great title! It's a nice Christian cliché often used to help us get to grips with the concept of identifying with people in their need. But the sentiment doesn't fit quite right in the context of world mission among the poor, many of whom don't own a pair of shoes.

Perhaps I'm over-reacting, but it seems to me that we are not very good at relating to people at that level.

I've had the privilege of working in Developing World countries for over 20 years, supporting the work of missionaries and local churches through humanitarian aid projects and creative mission programmes, and I've been learning valuable lessons along the way. The rickshaw pullers of Calcutta have been some of my teachers.

I was asked to preach at a gathering of 70 of these men, while our small team of volunteers distributed food and hot drinks and of course, shoes. I stood up to speak, but for once in my life I was speechless as I faced these bedraggled and weary men, who battled for 18 hours a day with the hazards of unpredictable traffic chaos, bare feet on the dirty streets, and the constant struggle to feed their families. How could I tell them, coming from my privileged position, that God cared for them?

I quickly prayed for God's help and within seconds knew what I had to do. I invited them all outside to the bustling city centre street, filled with noise of buses, bikes, rickshaws, lorries and any number of bizarre forms of transport all hooting loudly, demanding every inch of space. After getting one of the men to volunteer I asked him to sit on his own rickshaw, and standing between the two long, wooden poles, I took hold of them and started pulling the rickshaw, with its amazed passenger, down the crowded street. This was no publicity stunt. No cameras, no promotional pictures to impress people back home. Just a

genuine attempt to say something about God's

acceptance of people right where they are.

The only thing I regret was that I didn't take off my shoes.

Steve Flashman is a Baptist minister and International Director of Soapbox Expeditions

JOHN CLARK

DESCRIBES

THE LIFE OF TWO THEOLOGICAL STUDENTS IN BRAZIL







he bus jolted over another pothole, its springs had long lost the resilience of youth and did little to cushion Edilson from the continuous battering on the last stage of his journey home. Most nights he slept for the 90 minute trip. A day's work in a tax office followed by an evening studying theology left him drained. Tonight however, was different. This was his graduation year and his five year course was drawing to a close. He had been invited to speak at the weekly seminary service. He had been almost moved to tears as he expressed how much he was going to miss everything. The bus did a particularly vicious jolt - well perhaps he would not miss everything!



It had been difficult at first. His secondary schooling had been done in a poor, overcrowded school. In his first term at the seminary he had failed several of the exams. His job, the new church plant that he and his wife Gidalva had started, and the seminary course, seemed to demand more hours than a day provided. He'd stuck at it though and gradually learned to cope with the demanding routine. He'd enjoyed the more practical subjects, particularly the church planting and mission strategy courses. Systematic theology had been a bit too philosophical for his liking and the introduction to Greek and Hebrew had been enough to make him steer clear of the biblical exegesis course. His option for the missiology course had worked out well, though he couldn't quite see how studying Hinduism and Islam was going to help him in his work on the outskirts of Fortaleza. Then he remembered the mission strategy class that evening. They had reflected on New Testament missionary methods and the way that the Holy Spirit had led the church to break down the social and ethnic barriers, and be witnesses to the gospel, not only in Jerusalem and

Samaria, but to the ends of the earth. Perhaps the study of world religions was not so odd after all...

Roraima was home before Edilson caught his bus. His flat was on the 12th floor of a new block of flats near the seminary, a couple of minutes drive in his new Astra. His son Eduardo was absorbed in his new computer game. Edilson's words in the service had spoken to him. He too was finishing his course. It had taken him a year less. His Master's degree in Sociology had given him direct entry into the second year of the course. His work with the national environmental protection agency could be dangerous at times, but it did leave opportunities for study. The out of season lobster fishermen had not taken kindly to their arrival just as they were emptying their pots, and they had been met by gun fire. The police they took with them had dealt with that situation fairly quickly, and the three hour boat journey home had given plenty of time for him to prepare for the New Testament exegesis class.

The Greek of James' letter was harder than last term's studies in John's Gospel but the letter had so much to say to the Brazilian scene that the extra



effort was worthwhile. His conscience nagged him. The comments on today's passage about social and racial

discrimination had been a little bit too close to home for comfort. Their block of flats, like the example cited by their teacher, discriminated against the maids and the workers. There was one lift reserved for them and another for the residents. Pity the maid who got in the residents lift.

There was a noise at the door, that would be Enílima, his wife, just in from the Masters course she was doing at the State University. They had met at work, she was a Baptist minister's daughter, very bright and effervescent, a contrast to his quiet, more solid personality. She was on her third masters degree and was talking about the possibility of doing a PhD in France on a government grant. The economic crisis would probably put an end to that possibility.

He'd not been a Christian when they met. At first she had refused to go out with him, but when he accepted to go to church with her she had relented. Marriage had meant a promise to continue to go to church with her. For fourteen years he'd gone to church twice on Sunday and to the mid-week service. He had been interested at an intellectual level but nothing more. Then one Sunday evening, through the message of a visiting preacher, everything had changed. He'd come to a living faith in Jesus Christ and at the same time God had called him to serve him in the Christian ministry.

Now he was in the last year of Seminary and minister of a fast growing church on the outskirts of town. What next? He hoped to start a Masters degree in Theology next year and was interested in the invitation to be part time teacher at the Seminary. What would he do if his wife got the chance to do the PhD? It would mean going as a family to France. It would mean leaving his church. What would he do? What about their son? So much to pray about.

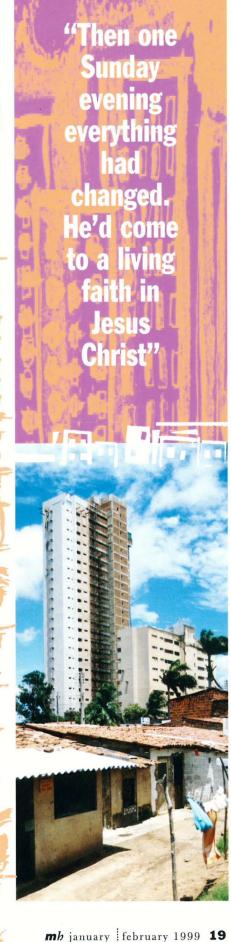


John Clark is a BMS missionary and lecturer at Fortaleza Theological Seminary, Brazil.

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Photographs Page 18: Bottom left: Edilson and Gidalva Page 19: Top left: Pastor Roraima Braid







A SERIES EDITED BY
JAN KENDALL THAT
LOOKS AT TOWNS
AND CITIES AROUND
THE WORLD WHERE
BMS PERSONNEL
ARE WORKING
BY STAN PORTER

History

In 1554 some Jesuit priests established a mission station called São Paulo dos Campos de Piratininga on the banks of the Rio Tietê. It developed into a trading post. The name was shortened to São Paulo and in the mid-1600s became a seat of regional government. By the mid-1800s it had become a small town.

In the late 1800s the coffee plantations were expanding and by the end of the century São Paulo state had

become the world's foremost producer of coffee. British and other foreign companies took the opportunity to invest in rail links and port facilities, and other industries such as textiles came to the area. Within a few decades São Paulo had become one of South America's greatest commercial and cultural centres – from a small town to a huge metropolitan sprawl.

São Paulo population

1890	69,000
1900	239,000
1950	2,200,000
1995	18,300,000

Introduction

São Paulo is one of the three largest cities in the world, at least in population. Over 20 million people live closely packed into an area smaller than London. Two rivers, the Tietê and

Pinheiros, meet and form a triangle on which the original city developed, but it has long since expanded to beyond the rivers. They have not lost their significance, as one of the few bits of planning can be seen in the ring road that follows these rivers round the city. One side of the river the traffic travels clockwise and the other side anticlockwise, on a road that varies from three to eight lanes in either direction. It is the third busiest road in the world! It is not unusual to hear on the news that there are 200, 300 or more miles of traffic jams in the city.

First Impressions by Jan Kendall

- Appalling roads even main roads – with deep pot-holes, and huge sleeping policemen which are called 'lombardas', designed to slow the traffic down. If you had four people in a car, you scraped the car's underside in a serious way every time you went over one of these!
- Every house firmly locked behind railings in its own compound.
- Armed guards everywhere
- Buildings were never finished.
 Brazilians always seemed to be adding on a room for use by another family member.
- The noise! Car horns blaring, and dogs barking all through the night.
- Heavy rain soon after arrival meant the main roads became rivers and water gushed UP and OUT of the drains.
- In the São Paulo suburbs poor areas, but not favelas – amazing electrical wiring. Every house plugging into the state supply for its own use.



our town: São Paulo



Shopping

If you went to a supermarket you would find it dwarfed even Britain's bigger hypermarkets. One hundred checkouts is quite normal and the queues take around 15 minutes on a normal day and up to an hour or more at busy times like Christmas. If one of the checkouts has a query, the supervisors come round on roller skates to speed things up!

There are also large shopping malls all over the city. Even some smaller ones would have over 100 shops, and many are so big that after lots of visits you still discover parts that you had not seen before. They would usually have large food halls with every sort of eating place from McDonalds to plush high class restaurants, and also large games halls with rides for toddlers, computer games and bowling alleys.

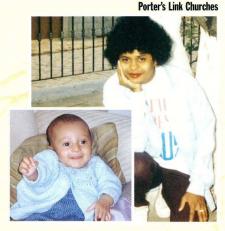
Religious scene

Just about every sort of belief imaginable would be found in São Paulo. The average Brazilian is very religious, whether that be Catholic,



Pentecostal,
Spiritist,
Animist, Baptist
or whatever.
There is no
shortage of
places to
worship but it
is not always
easy from their

names to fathom out what doctrines might be taught there! This is one reason why most orthodox Baptist churches are very insular, and do not share in public meetings or outreach with groups that are not affiliated to the Baptist Convention. One of the biggest needs in the Church in São Paulo, and in Brazil generally, is good sound teaching.



Profiles Joana

Joana was born in Rio de Janeiro, one of seven sisters, whose mother was widowed whilst Joana was still young. She married a conservative Baptist, Edimilson, an electrician by trade, and they came to São Paulo seeking work. Together they rented a small house in Taboão da Serra on the southern edge of the city. The house

our town: São Paulo

was beside a stream in a low-lying part of town and Joana took various cleaning jobs to augment Edimilson's meagre salary. The following January a flash flood caused the stream to overflow and their house was flooded to a depth of about seven feet and everything was ruined. They started again, but the same thing happened three years running. On one occasion Joana was nearly nine months pregnant, and had to scramble up onto the roof of her house and stay there all night to save her life. Joana and Edimilson are members of the Taboão da Serra Baptist Church, and are an example to all in living the Christian life. When Joana lost all her possessions yet again in another flood her comment was: "We have Jesus, so we have everything!"

São Paulo - a tale of two cities

People, people and more people; cars, cars and more cars; houses, houses and more houses ... But there's a big divide.

On the one hand you have the apartment blocks, and although many



condominiums - walled complexes of a number of apartment blocks, with 24 hour security guards - often armed cleaners, gardeners, play areas, party rooms, swimming pools and barbeque areas. The people who live here would work in air-conditioned offices, and banks. Most families would be entitled to two, three or even four garage spaces, and would use them.

So many cars produces a major traffic problem in the city with massive snarl-ups and terrible pollution. The city council have tried to counter this with a rota system. You cannot use your car on a Monday if the registration ends in 1 or 2; on Tuesday if it's 3 or 4 etc But many just buy another car with a

different registration.

Against the walls of these condominiums, or on any scrap of unwanted waste land, is the other São Paulo, Here the houses could be a few feet square, made of any scraps

materials that can be found on the scrap heap. They are often grouped into districts known as favelas. They would be unlikely to have running water, bathrooms or proper toilet facilities. There would be little or no furniture, and spare clothes would be stored in plastic bags in the comer. Sometimes there will be so many living in one house that they have to take turns to sleep.

Favelas quickly become centres for crime, drugs and prostitution. The millions who live in these conditions have often come from other deprived areas of Brazil, looking for work. All too often they are disappointed. If they are lucky they might get work as guards, cleaners or gardeners in a condominium or a factory, but many end up pulling hand carts round collecting waste paper, metal or something else to sell as scrap. For others it's worse still and they end up at one of the many sets of traffic lights asking for charity or trying to sell something like dusters made of cheap

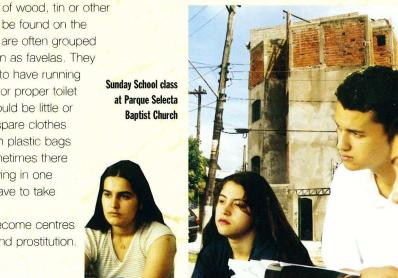
These two cities are interwoven geographically into a tight unit known as São Paulo, but are as far apart in other ways as the north and south poles. The chances of moving from one to the other are remote, and the greatest tragedy of all is that those who live in luxury are almost completely blind to the existence of the other face of São Paulo that is right on their doorstep, except to see it as a nuisance to be avoided at the traffic lights.



are office blocks, the great majority are living apartments.

They are usually the des-res of the middle to upper classes. Some of them can be 20 to 30 storeys high, with one to four apartments per floor. Often each apartment will have five or six bedrooms, most of them en suite, and every luxury and modern convenience you could imagine. Some even have their own private swimming pool!

Even most of the simpler apartments would have a separate room and bathroom for a live-in maid. These buildings are grouped in closed



volunteers a action teams

BMS VOLUNTEERS

Bomb site — a dentist's view



Dentist SIMON SHILLAKER and his nurse wife SALLY spent four weeks working at Chandraghona Christian Hospital in Bangladesh as BMS volunteers. Simon speaks about their work.

There is no trained dentist at the hospital, so with the help of an X-ray technician and an interpreter, I was able to treat 200 patients, using a head torch for check ups and my own equipment for fillings and extractions. People's teeth ranged from very good to 'bomb site' and it was a concern to see some children with teeth worse than their parents due to the arrival of sweets. For that reason, I visited an orphanage to teach oral hygiene to the children and to lecture at the nurse training school on the prevention of decay.

Sally worked on the children's ward and also gave some teaching to hospital staff. One of the mothers she met on the ward had a poorly son. Her husband was also sick at home, unable to work or visit. Consequently he couldn't raise the money for treatment and his wife hadn't eaten for two days, as he was unable to bring food. The hospital does not provide meals for

patients or visitors so they have to rely on other family members to bring and cook food. We found it difficult to watch people unable to receive treatment because they could not pay for it.

Back in England and reflecting on our time in Bangladesh we feel very privileged to have lived there. The experience made us examine our own lives and materialistic situation here in the UK, and it has given us greater confidence to speak out about the Lord. There is still no trained dental care at the hospital - a dental clinic and dentist are needed to continue the work, but perhaps if you have the time and skills, you could offer some help....

BMS 28:19 ACTION TEAMS

Extracts from the Albania Action Team diary, prior to their service overseas.

Tuesday 1st

Twenty-seven intrepid young people meet at All Nations Christian College in Hertfordshire, completely unaware of what the next five weeks will hold for them. Can't believe it's real and we're really here. The five weeks training is all that stands between us and Albania! Scary.

Sunday 6th

Someone tried to convert us to Islam today! In preparation for going to Albania, a country with a large Muslim population, we visited a mosque so that we could learn something about the people we would be meeting and how to communicate with them. It was an eye opening experience...

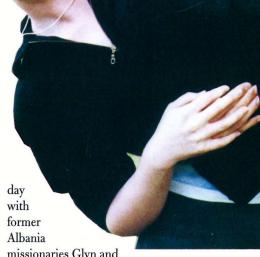
Saturday 12th

Our time at All Nations is now almost over. Didn't look much on paper but it was highly intensive. We learned many things, from theology, to the life story of a banana (don't ask).

Today we're

spending

the



missionaries Glyn and Gill Jones. Time to ask all those important questions like, what's the food like? Is it safe? Will the people welcome us? Cabbage, liver and more cabbage was one of the answers to the food question yuk!..

Monday 14th

Today we said farewell to All Nations and also to comfortable beds and hot water as we arrived at Tynddol Challenge Centre in Wales. The Centre's idyllic setting amongst the Welsh mountains and





on the banks of a babbling brook was a breath-taking sight. Unfortunately, despite the babbling brook, the Centre's water supply didn't stretch to more than five showers in the morning before running out of hot AND COLD water. We'll be spending ten days here involved in outdoor pursuits and team building...

relying completely on him. Looking back we can see how much this has helped us develop as a team and as individuals, although at the time we didn't appreciate it as we pulled ourselves out of yet another bog.

Wednesday 23th

Off to Charney Manor, a beautiful house set in the lovely countryside of Oxfordshire. Today was a day of giving thanks for hot showers,

comfortable beds and top grub!

Friday 25th

Off to Baptist House, the HQ of BMS, for the morning. We learned about writing prayer letters and articles, spoke to the Finance Director and had a guided tour of the house. Then, after a lovely lunch, it was tearful farewells as each team headed off on their church training placement. We went off to Chipping Campden Baptist Church in the Cotswolds...

Monday 5th

It's all over - or it's all beginning, depending on which way you look at it. The church placement has ended, and with it, the 28:19 training. We had a great time at Chipping Campden. The church was really vibrant and we established lasting friendships. We worked with people of all ages and led the whole

Sunday service at the end of the week. Our hosts had obviously heard that the Albanian food wasn't up to much because we've never eaten so many roast dinners in our lives! A definite high point! All in all it was a fantastic experience that will never be forgotten. Now it's off to Tirana, Albania to work with

the Way of Hope Baptist Church and to put into practice all that we have learned.

Albania Action Team

Tuesday 22th

Our last night at Tynddol. We've been so exhausted by all the physical exercise and sleeping in fields that we haven't had time to write a diary entry before now. One of the hardest activities was the canoeing. The water was indescribably cold and the weather was - well, Welsh! It took its toll as we swam, dragging our canoes 100 metres to shore. For many of us, it was at this stage when we had to hand it all to God, admitting our weaknesses and

Time to shower, sleep and get Carolyn Cole, our boss lady, to wash all our clothes!

Thursday 24th

This will be our last night all together with the other teams until we come back from Albania in April next year. We had a social evening with lovely food, decoration, barn dancing, games and a chance to dress up. The girls were all in posh dresses, and the boys were, well clean!



resources for leaders

EDUCATIONAL ENROLMENT

Figures given are a percentage of age group enrolled in education. The gross enrolment ratios may exceed 100 per cent because some pupils are younger or older than the country's standard primary, secondary or tertiary age.

Country	Primary		Secon	dary	Tertiary	
	Female	Male	Female	Male		
	1993	1993	1993	1993	1993	
Albania	97	95	-	-	10	
Bangladesh	105	128	12	26	-	
Belgium	100	99	104	103	-	
Brazil	-	-	x=4	.—	12	
Bulgaria	84	87	70	66	32	
CAR	51	92	8-8	-	2	
China	116	120	51	60	4	
Croatia	87	87	86	80	27	
El Salvador	80	79	30	27	15	
France	105	107	107	104	50	
Guinea	30	61	6	17	-	
India	91	113	38	59	-	
Indonesia	112	116	39	48	10	
Italy	99	98	82	81	37	
Nepal	85	129	23	46	3	
Sri Lanka	105	106	78	71	6	
Thailand	97	98	37	38	19	
UK	113	112	94	91	37	





Adult Sunday School class, Fortaleza, Brazil

The world's least literate nations				
Figures are	1993 adult literacy rate	, given as a percentage		
1	Niger	12.8		
2	Burkino Faso	18.0		
3	Somalia	24.9		
4	Nepal	26.3		
5	Mali	28.4		
6	Sierra Leone	29.6		
7	Afghanistan	29.8		
8	Senegal	31.4		
9	Ethiopia	33.6		
10	Burundi	33.7		

Highest education spending					
Figures are to 1994)	e a percentage of GNP	(latest available year up			
1	Uzbekistan	11.0			
2	Tajikistan	9.5			
3	Norway	9.2			
4	Namibia	8.7			
5	Botswana	8.5			
	Denmark	8.5			
7	Finland	8.4			
	Sweden	8.4			
9 (Repr	ablic of) Congo	8.3			
	Zimbabwe	8.3			



Lov	vest education spending	g
Figu	ires are a percentage of GNP (latest available
year	up to 1994)	
1	Somalia	0.5
2	(Dem Rep of) Congo	1.0
3	Nigeria	1.3
	Indonesia	1.3
5	Sierra Leone	1.4
	Haiti	1.4
7	El Salvador	1.6
	Guatemala	1.6
	Brazil	1.6
10	Madagascar	1.9
	Uganda	1.9
	Dominican Rep	1.9
	Georgia	1.9

Those engaged in theological education in Brazil		
Studying for a Doctor's degree	6	
Studying for a Master's degree	221	
Studying for a B Th degree	3052	
Studying for a B Educ degree	1040	
Studying for a B Music degree	708	
Studying for a B Missions degree	: 44	
Studying at medium level	522	
Studying a basic music course	218	
Studying at Post-graduate level	185	
Others	846	
TOTAL	6842	
Figures are for 1996, and include stud 34 different theological seminaries thr		



THE ENGLISH **LANGUAGE: DOES IT PLAY A PART IN** MISSION?

fact 1

There is a demand for professional English language teaching

throughout the world.

English language training institutes are rapidly appearing in cities throughout the world. Being computer literate and having a command of the English language are recognised as the best qualifications for a well-paid job, and give access to the wider world. Gone are the days when teaching English to foreigners was done by out-of-work actors and ministers' wives. There is a wealth of expertise, research and materials which enable those with a qualification in Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) to do a professional job, meeting the demands of an increasingly discriminating clientele.

fact

Trying to learn a local language gives insights for teaching English.

One does not have to be an expert in TEFL with years of varied experience and a doctorate in applied linguistics before offering for service in this area. A great deal can be learnt on the job by trial and error. Curiosity about how language works and the conviction that God has given us language that we may understand each other and him better, also help.

For up-to-date information on short training courses in TEFL in the UK, write

UCLES, 1 Syndicate Buildings, Hills Road, Cambridge CB1 2EU or Trinity College London, 16 Park Crescent, London, W1N 4AP. Tel 0171 323 2328

The above was abridged from a longer article by Jenny Dorman, BMS missionary and English Language Consultant with the United Mission to Nepal.





Above: Favela children at pre school group São Paulo, Brazil Left: A classroom in Nepal Below: Students at KISC, Nepal



Projects Prayer Deople



PIPS © UPDATE

Project 8019
Grant to FEBES (Baptist Federation of El Salvador) of £3,600

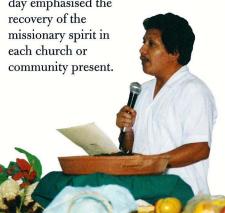
FEBES was formed five years ago by church leaders who, continuing their work as Baptists, needed a fellowship grouping to work together. (This was after BMS's former partners ABES broke off all relationships with all the mission groups working with them including the staff of the theological seminary and some church leaders and pastors.)

BMS signed a formal partnership with FEBES in 1997, and has given them financial support for their work and agricultural projects.

FEBES have reported excellent attendance at special events held in 1998. Four celebrations were planned during the year, to unite the 12 churches which make up the Federation.

The first was a Great Easter Vigil to which 250 adults and 65 children came. The programme included musical groups, testimonies, Bible studies, meals together, and a procession through the neighbourhood adjacent to the church.

Three hundred and 20 adults and 50 children came to the second event, held at Pentecost. The programme for this day emphasised the



PRAYER FOCUS



Margaret Gibbs: Durres, Albania

Formerly a BMS missionary in Nepal, Margaret Gibbs is now in Albania responsible for teaching English to students at the Theological College and for the education of the children of colleagues Paul and Elisabeth Towlson. Margaret and the four children: Jessica (11), Michael (9), Evelyn (8) and Philip (4) are getting along well and have settled into their new schooling pattern. Tailor-making lessons for each child can be difficult, especially as Jessica is older than the children Margaret has taught in the past.

Please pray:

thank God that Margaret has already built good relationships with the children and pray this will develop

for wisdom and creativity in lesson planning and that Margaret and the children would enjoy their time together for good relationships with the theological students



Joyce and Stuart Filby: Bredene, Belgium

For some time now, as numbers increased at the church started in the Filby's home, they have been seeking more suitable and permanent premises. The whole church was very disappointed when 'The Boat', a pub which they believed was for them and which had been promised to the church, was given to someone else. They were even more dismayed when it was reopened as a gay bar but the whole church continued praying. Then, suddenly, the bar closed and two months later the owners went bankrupt. A few weeks later the church was asked if they would take the building, at a slightly lower rent and with the previous tenants having cleaned it up for them! God is very good! The ground floor is a restaurant with a bar for a planned youth cafe, upstairs is a large lounge which will hold around 120 as the main church and there are two bedrooms which will be used as Sunday school rooms.

Please pray:

thank God for his goodness and provision

the church plans to outgrow the building within two years, expecting in faith that God will continue adding to their number. Pray it will be so.



Angela and Paul Foster: Pokhara, Nepal

Paul and Angela and their children George, Olivia and Harry have been in

Nepal since August 1998, undergoing language training and orientation. They were amazed at the welcome they received, especially the children who were a little nervous about going to a new school. Waiting for them when they arrived were 'welcome gifts' from their class mates; pictures, photos of the school, pieces of writing about themselves and even a tape of the children talking and singing! The family visited two Nepali churches in their first few weeks. Each time they were asked to introduce themselves and managed to say their names and that they were from England, in their best Nepali. Everyone smiled and clapped! The couple are due to complete their initial period of orientation very soon when Paul will begin work with the International Nepal Fellowship as an anaesthetist. They will continue language training, both formal and informal, throughout their time in Nepal.

Please pray:

daily

thank God that the children have settled in well to their new school and for the friendship of the other children the Nepali language is difficult to learn – pray for the whole family as they seek to communicate with those they meet

for good relationships to be built between Paul and his colleagues and that he quickly settles into a new working environment

that the whole family would build good, supportive friendships with both Nepalis and other expats



Peter and Margaret Goodall: Colombo, Sri Lanka

Peter and Margaret have come to the end of their time in Sri Lanka. They return to the UK at the end of December and retire following a period of Home Assignment. They have overseen a number of excellent projects during their time in the country including: pastoring a church, working with the William Carey Institute – a theological and leadership training school, overnight accommodation for hospital outpatients and visitors, computer, sewing and English courses. There are also plans for a number of social projects which should be up and running soon. Peter and Margaret are happy to be leaving the work in the hands of some excellent workers now in place.

Please pray:

1 for guidance as they seek the next step in their lives

that they will settle quickly into the UK
for those continuing the work in Sri
Lanka, especially for Heshan, the new
pastor of the church



Rosimar and TimothyDeller: Goiânia, Brazil

What can appear to be a frustrating barrier can sometimes turn out to be for the best, as Tim and Rosimar have found. Tim has been advised not to take on extra work until he is given the all clear by his doctor, and so has been concentrating on theological seminary teaching, putting on hold plans for the launch of a church plant project. Whilst it has been a frustrating time for him, it has allowed him to get alongside his students more and to participate, as the only Protestant, lecturing on a teacher training course for teachers of Religious Education. He was frightened to find what is being taught on that course. That is, that all religions lead to salvation and an encounter with the living God: be it Afro-Spiritism or any other ism. From this opening, he has been asked to participate in the

prayer focus & people worldwide





beginnings of ecumenical dialogue in the State. Rosimar has been coordinating the praise and worship department of their local church alongside studying for a degree and being involved in other musical activities. She has also worked on a project helping street children get into government shelters and has gained experience at a friendship house.

Please pray:

U for strength - both Tim and Rosimar have had some health problems recently I for wisdom for both in knowing what roles to take on and when to rest

expanding prayer focus

In this new series BMS personnel introduce friends and acquaintances whom they meet from day to day.

ANA CHRISTINA RIO DE JANEIRO, BRAZIL

Ana Christina was brought up in a spiritist atmosphere, with all her family



and friends involved in spiritism. When she was pregnant with her first child, she felt she wanted to be free from spiritism, and she'd heard what she describes as 'a sort-of message' in the Catholic church, but her mother forbade her to go. Evil spirits often came on her mother, to which her mother would say, "It's because you're going to that other church. You're betraying our religion."

When her first child was 11 months old, he became very ill. Her mother said the only way his life could be spared would be for Ana Christina to spend a week in a spiritist centre to appease the spirits. She said, "It was a terrible week, because of all the evil practices they were doing, speaking in God's name, but doing terrible things. I was worse; my son was worse. I was afraid to leave the house because I could see myself killing my child throwing him out of a window or something like that to appease the spirits."

This situation created tension with her partner who thought she was 'going mental.'

One Saturday, at the height of all this, she left the house, with the intention of killing herself. She said, "I came to this road (ie the road in which Usina Baptist Church is located). Something told me to turn and look back. I didn't see the church, but I saw the cross on the church building. I came in through the gate thinking there might be some activity going on here, but there was only the pastor, his wife and a young seminary student here. I came and sat on the steps and cried. The pastor and his wife came and talked to me about the love of Jesus. At that moment I accepted Jesus. From that moment on, my life changed."

But her family, including her partner, were not happy about her decision. They did not want her to be a believer and persecuted her.

But she hung on to her new faith. The pastor came and took away all the things she had used for witchcraft. He put them in a sack and burnt them.

Her son recovered. Her family continued to threaten her that he would die, but today at seven years old he is very much full of life. He reads the Bible because he wants to and not because she tells him to.

When Ana Christina became a Christian, she wasn't married - just living with her partner. As she was not married, she could not be baptised. Her partner refused to become a Christian. He saw her in tears one day because of this situation, and asked her why she was crying. "It's because I want to get baptised, and I can't because you won't marry me officially" she replied. In turn, he said, "If that's the problem, I'll marry you." This was the first step in her husband coming to faith in the Lord.

Today her husband, mother, motherin-law and aunts are all believers. There is just one cousin who has not yet come to the Lord, and Ana Christina has brought many people to Christ through her testimony.

David and Sheila Brown (BMS personnel working for the **Brazilian World Missions Board)**

BASHAR DHAKA, BANGLADESH

Bashar and his family were in bed. It had been raining for two months and each night they had been watching anxiously as the water level rose outside. Most people would have a roof to clamber on when things got really bad, but Bashar knew his roof was not

people worldwide



Photographs: top of page 30, and below, floods in Bangladesh

strong. So he decided the safest thing would be to move up into a nearby tree. At least they were slightly above the worst.

Bangladesh is a flat country – water and sanitation systems are basic to say the least and easily overflow. Virtually all of Dhaka was waist deep with this filthy water.

Fortunately about one-third of the country is spared the floods including the Hill Tracts above Chittagong, where I am based. I needed to get to Dhaka Airport, but this was far from straightforward. In the end I chose the only viable option: to fly.

Approaching the capital from the air, I was shocked to see the extent of the disaster: mile upon mile of water, and even vehicles underwater along submerged roads.

The airport is protected by a 15 foot tall embankment built ten years ago under similar circumstances. This kept the airport open - just! The water level was dangerously high, a mere three inches from the top. All essential diplomatic staff had received their orders to leave, so the airport was bustling with activity.

As Bashar drove me to the airport he was anxious in case the embankment finally gave way. He was also concerned that his 13 month old son had severe diarrhoea.

He dropped me off at the airport. I was relieved to be able to leave, but he had no such opportunity, trapped in a country where hepatitis and cholera are now well established and market produce in short supply. Daily there are stories of heroism and near escapes: the husband of one of the office staff in Dhaka nearly got sucked down an open drain as the cover had been swept away

by water. It was only by the quick reactions of his two companions who pulled him out literally by his hair and shoulder, that he was rescued. Sue Headlam (Community Health Programme nurse with BMS)

LUANA RAILWAY FAVELA, **FORTALEZA**

Luana is just 17 and has given birth to her second baby. The picture shows her a week after giving birth. She was

forced to have the baby by the state hospital staff before she was ready - she wasn't fully dilated, but the hospital staff forced her to push. As a result of the pressure exerted, her eyes became bloodshot (as you can see from the photo) and she had to have 42 stitches. She was discharged from hospital after a day.

Her family helped her bring up her first child, but said if she still wanted to live with them, she would have to give away the new born child. So she gave

> her second baby away.

It was through **BMS** missionary Andy Eaves's visit to the Railway Favela that he found Luana, and he was able to put her in touch with BMS midwife Mary Parsons.

Andy Eaves (BMS community worker) as told to Jan Kendall



bms news

New Staff Appointments New Director for World Mission

David Kerrigan, BMS
Regional Representative
for Asia, has been
appointed as the new
Director for World
Mission.



This appointment

comes about with the merging of the
Department of Operations which deals with
strategy and partnerships, and the
Department for Missionaries, which deals
with all matters concerning overseas
personnel with effect from 1 February
1999. David Kerrigan will head this new
department.

David says, "In so many parts of this country I see God at work through our churches, and those same churches committed to the worldwide task of making Jesus known. With new areas of work established and a strategy for expanding our work around the world, this is clearly an exciting time for the BMS and the churches of our three Unions."

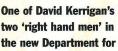


New Regional Secretary for Europe

Andrew North, currently BMS Missionary Support Manager, has been

appointed as the new Regional Secretary for Europe, following Regional Representative for Europe John Passmore's move to become Regional Secretary for Asia and North Africa.

New Manager for Mission Personnel





World Mission will be Joy Knapman, currently Director for Missionaries. She will take up the post of Manager for Mission Personnel (although this title has not been fully ratified) from 1 February 1999, and this will involve her in the recruitment of missionary personnel and other missionary matters.



Help for the back of beyond



A bundle of rice, beans and flour does not sound much, but it's been the difference between life and death to 250 families in Roraima, a little-known and under-developed state in the north of Brazil, with a population of 350,000 of whom

30,000 are indigenous people, and 230,000 are immigrants from north-east Brazil.

The capital Boa Vista has a population of 200,000. It is to



be found 740 km north of Manaus, the rain forest capital with a link road – tarmacked in

places – that is only passable at certain times of the year. There are ten Baptist churches in the state, nine of them situated in Boa Vista; the other is in the town of Mucajaí.

Back in March 1998 drought and then fire swept through Roraima. The drought was the longest ever experienced and had dried the swamps and rivers. Herds of cattle died. The ensuing fires started in 63 separate places, and destroyed over 30,000 square kilometres of jungles, towns and villages – a massive 15.3 per cent of the total land area of the state. Four thousand agricultural workers and 6,000 indigenous people were left with no means of providing their own food.

The Roraima Baptist Convention appealed for help, and the BMS Relief Fund sent them £10,000 on 31 March.

The Convention used this and other money received to help 250 families over a period of five months. The money provided a 40 kg bag of food – basic items like milk powder, salt, sugar, oil, manioc flour, beans and rice – but enough to last them until the next harvest, and New Testaments. Brazilians believe in catering for both physical and spiritual hunger at the same time.

The distribution of the supplies was done by a team of volunteers led by Ezequias Silva Feitosa, the General Secretary of the Roraima Baptist Convention. Feitosa has lived in Boa Vista all his life and is a layman who works as a political advisor to a Roraimian politician.

As a result many people came to faith in Christ. It is expected that several new congregations will emerge from amongst these afflicted people.



bms news

October 1998 General Committee Report

First Steps in New Volunteer Programme

BMS has made the first steps in launching a new volunteer



programme.
Alistair
Brown
unfolded a
strategy for
expanding
the BMS

volunteering scheme in which BMS could be the main agency for British Baptists and others to fulfil their calling and give time to God.

This will not just be one programme – rather a whole family of volunteering programmes, linked together by a common 'surname'. They will give scope for medical teams of all disciplines; practical teams undertaking identified tasks; evangelism teams; summer teams; mission students as well as youth action teams and solo volunteers.

A lot has to happen to make this all come about. New posts will be created for visionary and organisationally gifted people to be volunteer organisers – these may be nationals recruited overseas or missionaries sent from this country.

The projects will be selffinancing. BMS, in turn, will help people raise their finances and will publicise what others have done for their fund-raising.

General Committee voted to extend the BMS Volunteer Programme and empowered the BMS Board of Management to take any decisions on staffing and procedures to allow expansion of the Volunteer Programme. Alistair Brown said, "We are not beyond the age of attempting great things and expecting great things."

New Scheme for Co-ordination in Wales

A new strategy of co-

ordination in Wales will take place over the next five years, which will result, after that time, with only



one Co-ordinator covering the whole of Wales.

At present two BMS Coordinators cover the principality, with Gareth Hutchinson taking responsibility for South Wales, and Delyth Wyn Davies, working part-time, covering North Wales. Gareth Hutchinson retires at the end of 1998, and his leaving has precipitated a rethink, and a new strategy concerning how BMS work in Wales will be done.

Richard Wells, Director of Communications, proposed a three year plan to General

Committee, which emphasised recruiting and training active voluntary group help. The accent on BMS



promotion and education work would change from "having it done to them" to "having a hand in doing it".

General Committee members asked that this programme be extended to take up to five years, especially, they argued, as the South and Central Wales Coordinator had not been appointed yet. This amendment of the scheme taking five years was carried.

New Candidates Accepted



Gordon and Ann McBain's offer of service was accepted by General Committee.
Gordon and Ann are members of Hoddesdon Baptist Church.
Gordon is at present Tutor and Assistant Bursar at All Nations Christian College, and Ann

describes herself as a part-time social worker, and full-time housewife.

They have been accepted for work with ACT in North Africa, subject to approval of ACT, when it is anticipated that Gordon will become ACT's Personnel Director.

Both Gordon and Ann served with BMS in the Democratic Republic of Congo in the 1980s.

Finance Plan Approved



BMS Treasurer Mervyn Hancock asked BMS General Committee to approve the Estimates for 1998/1999. Mr Hancock said, "I view this as a transitory budget. There are decreases in some areas, and increases in others in line with the BMS Strategy."

This 'transitory budget' of £4.9 million was approved. Of this, nearly £3.5 million will be spent on overseas work.

BMS Finance and Administration Director, Chris Hutt spoke of the need for incoming finance to increase by four per cent to be able to meet all spending requirements for the forthcoming year. This means that every member of a Baptist church needs to give £27 or more a year.

Check Out January/February 1999

January

Arrivals

lain and Karen Gordon from Kathmandu, Nepal

Departures

Bob and Ruth Ellett to Butwal, Nepal Mike and Daveen Wilson to Trapiá, Brazil

Mark and Andrea Hotchkin to Guinea Conakry, Republic du Guinée Owen and Deanna Clark to Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo

Reuben and Katie Martin to Zagreb, Croatia

February

Arrivals

Saverio Guarna and Betsy Guarna-Moore from Tirana, Albania

Departures

None

world mission link

world





Ampthill gives clear signals



Children at Ampthill Baptist
Church were all set for a fun
day. Named Lighthouse Brazil Day, after
their Lighthouse Sunday School, they
used the BMS children's Window on the

World (WOW) project book based on Brazil.
Making sure all things Brazilian were included in the day: football, food and favelas to name a few, they also learned about BMS missionaries based in Fortaleza, Brazil.

At the end of the day they were also able to send some money towards the BMS WOW Children's Project.





BB overshoot their target

Last year Boys' Brigade Companies raised over £8,000 to help re-equip Yakusu Hospital in the Democratic Republic of Congo. The hospital had been gutted and all the equipment looted by retreating soldiers of the then-Zairean army in March 1997. The BB had been set a target of £5,500, but reached their highest total for six years. Contributions came from small and large BB companies, from boys aged between five and 18.



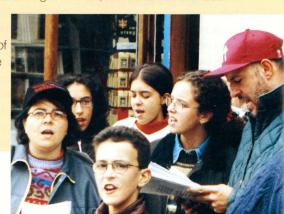
Scottish Borders Giant Link-Up

This was a Link-Up visit with a difference. Not only did BMS personnel Ann and David MacFarlane come to visit their Borders West Link-Up group, but they brought a team of 20 Italian Christians with them! They came from five different churches in South Italy: Mottola, Bari, Barletta, Gioia del Colle, and Altamura.

A barbecue was held for the visitors at Galashiels; seven-a-side football contests arranged at Selkirk; plus a ceilidh at Peebles; and a 'Hunt the Haggis' car treasure hunt organised for the young people. The team also took part in outreach work in holiday clubs and street evangelism.

Alastair Sinclair, co-ordinating the visit, said: "The visit involved considerable organisation and hard work both from the visiting and receiving churches, but we all felt the result

had been well worth the effort and the sense of God's presence in it all was our benediction."



Vinoth Ramachandra

Empire-building or sacrifice?

arly Christian missionaries to South Asia were willing to endure incredible hardships. Theirs is often a tale of debilitating illness, personal tragedy and premature death. Moreover, most of the early Protestant missionaries came from the lower-middle classes of European society and practiced a sacrificial lifestyle. For instance, contrast William Carey (1761-1834), the cobbler from Northamptonshire who made India his home, with Robert Clive (1725-1774) of the East India Company who salted away a massive personal fortune through his ruthless exploits in India, and retired to England to enjoy his booty. Carey gave away his earnings from printing and translating for the missionary cause in India, where he died.

Carey's wife had shown signs of mental instability before the couple sailed from England with their young children. The death of their eldest son within a few weeks of arriving in India pushed her over the edge into complete insanity. Several times during their life in India she attempted to kill her husband and children. There was no psychiatric care or mental hospitals for her and people like her.

Clive and Carey, empire-building or servanthood? – Two contrasting stories of the West's historic interaction with Asia. Clive is mentioned in all history books. Few know about Carey and missionaries like him. Yet it was Carey who left a more lasting legacy in India, and was hailed by Rabindranath Tagore as the "Father of modern Bengal". Since post-colonial guilt has paralysed mission in some sections of the Western Church, shouldn't we be telling our young people the stories of servanthood and sacrifice which have redeemed the missionary movement?



Vinoth Ramachandra is South Asia Regional Secretary of IFES



"Now let's see where were we? ... Oh yes, ... 'when baptising by immersion, one must make sure that the convert fully understands the symbolism of his act with Christ's death and resurrection. See further under Christology page 287'

Lets go there and check that out - shall we?"



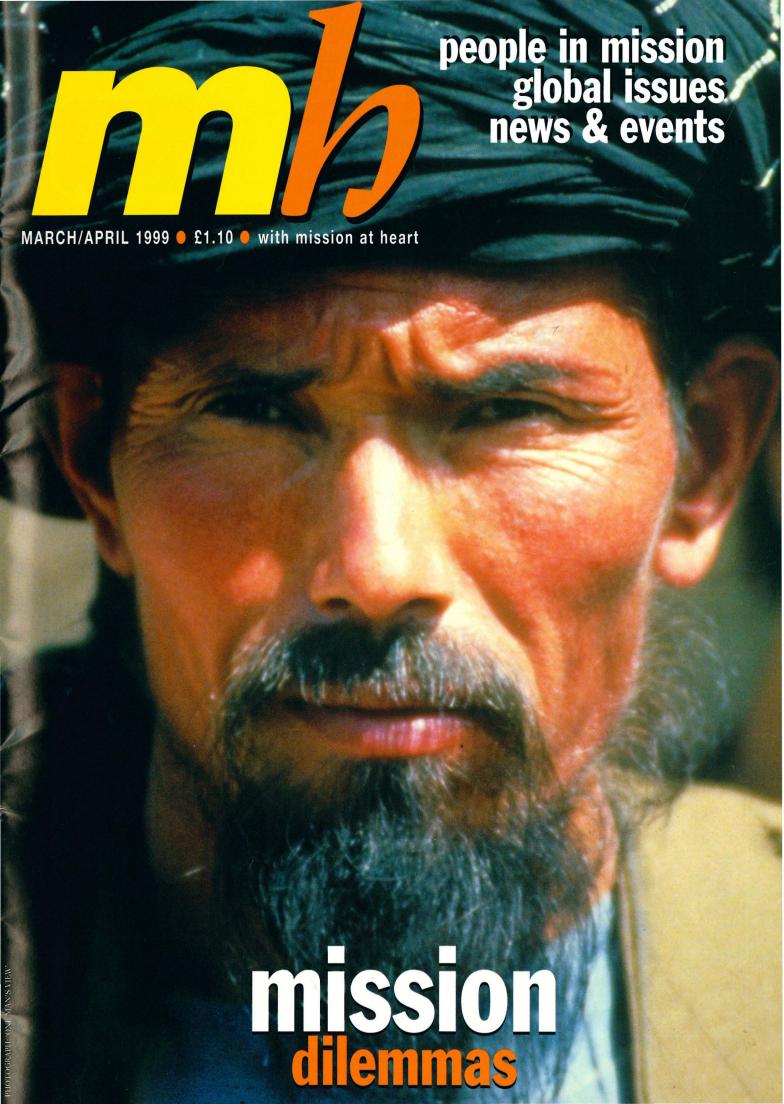
SEX

SEX - part of a three year youth project 'Sex, Drugs, Rock n' Roll. A resources pack presents the issues of morality, pregnancy and abortion, marriage and divorce, homosexuality HIV and AIDS in a worldwide context, making it relevant to young people in the 14+ age group in Britain today.

Pack available free of charge.

Contact BMS Resource Department on 01235 517617 or email: resources@bms.org.uk for more information

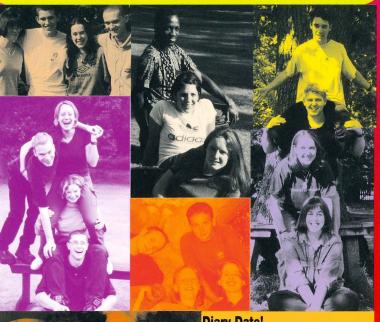




action team tour

BMS 1998/99 Action Teams, newly returned from near and far will be touring the UK during May and June.

Young people excited with all that God has done, with stories to tell, songs to sing, prayers to pray. Give them a miss only if you can't be bothered to know how God is working in people's lives today - all over the world!



Diary Date!

The 1998-99 Action Teams will be 'in action'

Thursday 24 June

7.30pm

in the Oxford area

Come and meet all the 28:19 Teams, and hear about their experiences, challenges and changes over the past year. Bring your young people and be encouraged yourself! See what God is doing in the world and in people's lives!

More details in May/June mh

Midlands

Theo Lambourne 0116 271 3633

Hinckley Irinidad leam		△ Miss Dorothy Blower 01455 637 964	24-26 April
Gorsley	Trinidad Team	☞ Mrs Liz Bishop 01989 720 312	26 April-3 !
Leominster	Trinidad Team	☎ Mr Aubrey Roberts 01568 708 247	3-10 May
Oadby	Nepal Team	☎ Theo Lambourne 0116 271 3633	10-17 May
Stratford-upon-Avon	Brazil Team	☎ Mr Richard Cox 01789 205 816	17-24 May
Coventry	Albania Team	☎ Mr Colin Gardner 01203 614 211	24-31 May
Ledbury	Thailand Team	☎ Revd Simon Minshull 01531 632 079	31 May-7 Ju
Hinckley	France Team	Miss Dorothy Blower 01455 637 964	14-21 June

Scotland

Derek Clark © 0141 775 1201 for all venues

Edinburgh	Nepal Team	17-24 May
Cathcart (Glasgow)	Albania Team	17-24 May
Wigtown	Brazil Team	31 May-7 June
Edinburgh	Thailand Team	7-14 June
Stirling	UK Team	7-14 June
Hamilton	Brazil Team	7-14 June

visiting a place near you!

North and West Wales

Delyth Wyn Davies ☎ 01766 512957

Wrexham	Nepal Team	☎ Mr John Wells	01978 314441	31 May-7 June
Bangor	Trinidad Team	☎ Dr Bryan Collis	01248 353173	14-21 June

South and Mid Wales

Delyth Wyn Davies **☎** 01766 512957

Cardiff	Albania Team	☎ Miss Beryl Davies 01222 756426	24 April-3 May
Llanelli	France Team	☎ Mr Vivian Williams 01554 755523	3-10 May
Presteigne	Albania Team	☎ Mrs Sue Wilson 01544 267456	3-10 May
Bridgend	Albania Team	☎ Revd Euros Miles 01656 880022	31 May-7 June
Pembroke	Trinidad Team	☎ Mrs Betty Smith 01437 751226	7-14 June
Swansea	Brazil Team	☎ Dr Gaynor McClean 01792 204482	14-21 June

London and South East

Simon Jones © 0171 639 8717 for all venues

Addlestone	Brazil Team	3-10 May
Chatsworth	Thailand Team	10-17 May
Carshalton Beeches	Thailand Team	17-24 May
Northolt Grange	Trinidad Team	17-24 May
Venue TBA	France Team	31 May-7 June
Vonue TRA	Trinidad Toam	21 May-7 Juno

South and West

Phil Hindle # 01823 698977 for all venues

Swindon	Brazil Team	24 April-3 May
Exeter	Thailand Team	3-10 May
Swindon	France Team	10-17 May
Banbury and Bloxham	France Team	17-24 May
Salisbury	France Team	24-31 May
Fleet	Trinidad Team	24-31 May
Bloxham	Nepal Team	7-14 June
Chard	Nepal Team	14-21 June
011-1-0	All S. T.	14.01 1

North

Cath Mawson @ 01274 487341

Dronfield	France Team	☎ Marilyn Fenn 01246 416796	26 April- 3 Ma
Scapegoat Hill	Albania Team	☎ David Humphries 01484 650816	10-17 May
Ainsdale	Brazil Team	☎ Ralph Gower 01704 577462	24-31 May
Caton	Nepal Team	☎ Cliff Jackson 01524 771261	24-31 May
Rochdale	Thailand Team	☎ Val Treeton 01706 522084	14-21 June
Blackhill	UK Team	☎ Roger Green 01207 505055	14-21 June

Central and Eastern

John Smith = 01502 567686

Ramsden Bellhouse	Nepal Team	☎ John Hopper 01268 710069	26 April-3 May
Leighton Buzzard	Nepal Team	☎ Keith Hales 01525 371312	3-10 May
Southend	Brazil Team	☎ Philip Hughes 01702 477013	10-17 May
Cambs	Trinidad Team	☎ Sheila Bull 01954 231404	10-17 May
Luton	Thailand Team	☎ Mr & Mrs F Taylor 01582 726415	24-31 May
Buckingham	France Team	☎ Dafydd Jones 01280 813862	7-14 June
Saffron Walden	Albania Team	☎ Esme Moon 01799 522629	7-14 June

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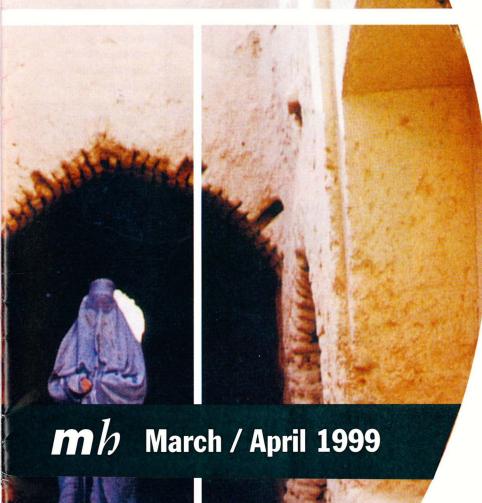
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The options available in a closed country

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28 People, Projects, Prayer Latest news and updates

credits

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e face choices every day of our lives, whether it's which brand of soup to buy in the supermarket, which TV programme to watch, or which songbook to use in church (or none at all if you've got an overhead projector).

Sometimes the number of items available makes choice very difficult, but it is a decision to be made out of the sheer abundance which faces us, and one in which the final decision is not likely to be a matter of life or death.

There are choices, and then there are dilemmas. Every day people have to make agonising decisions, perhaps affecting their own or someone else's life, when there is no clear-cut answer.

The world of mission throws up its own dilemmas. No decision will be easy, and it may be that whichever side of the question you come down on as your response, will mean danger, risk, or suffering for someone else.

Think I'm being melodramatic? Then turn to the features section in this issue. Here we relay to you real issues, problems and dilemmas that confront Christian believers, missionaries and workers, especially in certain areas of the world — so called 'closed areas'.

It is because of the very real danger either to themselves or the people they are writing about that some of the articles deliberately do not carry an author's name, or names and places have been changed to help preserve their identity. The accompanying photos are of necessity general in nature, because to identify someone specifically could mean real trouble for them.

I hope you find it a challenging read.
Once again, thank you for your interest and support of world mission. May God bless you in all you dream and do for the gospel of Christ.





World



traditional
evangelism. In
turn, the scheme
which is run in cooperation with a
local church, has
given an
opportunity to
Christians running
the loan project to

Thailand Micro-credit scheme yields interest in the gospel

In rural Thailand it is estimated that 80 per cent of the population live in debt. But a micro-credit scheme funded by churches, individuals and grants from the Australian government has enabled villagers living in the Taphraya district, near the Cambodian border, to find their feet financially. These people were previously untouched by

both demonstrate and talk about God's love.

The loans are usually around £100 or so, and are given with a monthly repayment rate of 1.5 per cent – far below the typical market rate, which, in Thailand, stands at more than 60 per cent per year.

Start-up funds have been used to buy fertiliser for rice fields, purchase a motor cycle, and buy noodle-making equipment. One group used borrowed money to buy 30 piglets and made several hundred pounds profit within four months.

Altogether 83 loans have been completed, with another 106 ongoing. The interest earned, provides the next round of loans.

news

A spokesman for the project said, "Recipients of relief are sometimes made to feel that they can't do anything themselves to become self-sufficient, and so they develop a mentality of dependence.

"Micro-credit tackles this by freeing the individual, enabling them to take care of themselves and releasing them to believe in themselves so they can provide for their families.

"We started this because we had a strong desire to see people break out of poverty, become more productive and improve their livelihoods. It also provides a natural opportunity for ongoing interaction with the poor and needy where Christians can portray Jesus through their actions." (YWAM News)

Lebanon "Born-again people" under attack

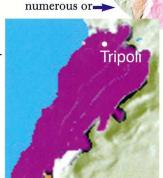
Books and leaflets directed against the "bornagain people" have been distributed in the Koura area, east of Tripoli, Lebanon, specifically attacking the only evangelical witness in the area, the Bechmezzine Baptist Church and its



leaders, Gaby and Louise Eid.

Both graduates from the Arab Baptist Theological Seminary in Beirut, they moved to the Koura area from their Beirut home two years ago and set up a meeting place for the Bechmezzine church. From a congregation of one (their daughter) the church has now grown to more than 50 baptised members, and a regular attendance of even more.

This area is one in which mosques are being constructed every kilometre or so along major roads. But generally speaking the Muslim citizens are not numerous or



Chechnya

Baptist pastor Alexey Sitnikov of the Grozny
Baptist church is one of two clergy who were
kidnapped last October and have disappeared
without trace. Sitnikov was taken from his church
premises by two strangers. He has reportedly
been kidnapped and released twice before; on
one occasion he was beaten until he lost
consciousness and then left at a local hospital.
The other victim, Father Issihiy, a Russian
Orthodox priest, was abducted the next day. The
kidnappers have still not made any attempt to
make contact. (BWA/Open Doors)

Egypt

A new law on the statute books means that church construction will now be in the hands of local administrators, rather than the State.
Churches may not be built near a mosque, another church, a railway, farmland, in an inappropriate district, or contrary to local wishes. If local bodies are antagonistic, it could mean delays in building work could be even longer than previously encountered. (EMA)

Greece

The European Court of Law in Strasbourg, France, has exonerated two officers of the Greek Air Force who had been court-marshalled for evangelism. In 1992, a military court in Greece found the pair "unworthy of military service" and sentenced them to detention for undermining the Greek Orthodox Church by their actions. (EMA)

Guinea-Bissau

Three hundred thousand people – a quarter of the population – have been forced to leave their homes as a result of fighting between the Army and rebel soldiers. These people now live as refugees, and the United Nations fears they may starve as other parts of the world are making huge demands on relief resources. (EMA)

Central America

Baptists around the world have given money for food, medicine, water and building materials following the devastation in Central America caused by Hurricane Mitch. However Baptist World Alliance Regional Secretary for Latin America, Daniel Carro, is concerned that poverty has created even more destruction than natural disasters. He pointed out that Hurricanes Georges and Mitch would not have been as devastating if there were not already such poverty in the region. (BWA)

ebanon

world news

fanatical, although money is paid to anyone who "reconverts" to Islam.

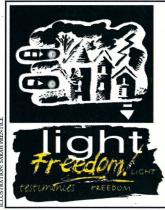
The Greek Orthodox presence here is strong however, and it is they who have directed a misinformation campaign against the Bechmezzine church. Representatives went on a door-to-door visit warning residents against the Baptists; they wrote booklets against them, calling them the "born-again people", and included factual distortions and innuendoes containing the charges that they were American agents or Jews; and called a community meeting at the Orthodox church to talk about them. The situation remains tense. No one can visit the church without everyone else knowing, and especially for new believers this kind of uncertainty and scrutiny can be hard to bear. (EBPS)

Belgium Surprises for occult web searchers

The title page on the web site of a spooky looking graphic of lightning



breaking over a haunted house welcomes French speakers from across



Europe. But Internet browsers wanting to learn more about the occult then find they are given a warning not to dabble in the unknown, and are then led to testimonies of people caught up in everything from witchcraft to numerology.

The Ichthus Connection web site is run as part of a low-key attempt to bring a biblical message to the growing cyberspace community.

The project leader Jean-Christophe Cailleau commented, "There has always been a certain tradition of occult in the country, and New Age thinking is expanding. When one of the staff was looking for information about the occult on the web she found tons of sites, but none from a Christian point of view. We realised that something needed to be done."

The site was designed with non-Christians in mind so that the average web surfer would not be put off. In fact it has featured as one of the most visited sites by those searching for French-speaking occult sites.

Since its launch a year ago, Cailleau says, "We have had lots of questions, even insults from some people, but have also heard from people who are genuinely interested in our point of view."

(YWAM News)



Indonesia Baptists caught in rioting

Baptist churches were among those damaged and burned by the current religious rioting in Indonesia. During November 1998, 13 churches were damaged and burned, including the Baptist church in Grogol, a suburb of Jakarta, whose guard was beaten up. Muslim youths threw stones at its windows, damaging them, and a car belonging to the church was also burned.

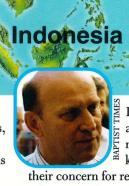
Baptist leaders were able to guard the offices of the Union of Indonesian Baptist churches and the Calvary Baptist church in Jakarta. Twice they were approached by rioting young people, but the leaders were able to persuade them to leave.

"It was just like war," one leader said, "we did not dare stay inside our homes. We turned off all the lights in the homes and took down all the signs that identified the church, school and office buildings."

Continuing reports say that in retaliation, some Christian young people have burned mosques and other Muslim buildings. The whole situation is escalating, fuelled by the severe economic crisis in Indonesia.

Some 15,000 Indonesians are being put out of work every day, and inflation stood at 70 per cent over the first eight months of 1998.

Denton Lotz, the General Secretary of the Baptist World Alliance, has appealed for Baptists around the world to pray for believers in



Indonesia, and to make known

their concern for religious tolerance and peace to their government leaders. (BWA/EMA)

Ukraine Worship from the heart

As part of a pilot programme a group of Christians are spending six months in the Ukraine studying how to use traditional music styles in church services. Participants from as far afield as Switzerland and the Soviet Republic of Bashkir as well as from within the Ukraine, have come to Kiev for the first-ever School of

Indigenous Music and Songwriting.

The course is being led by American Vicki Hoodikoff, who developed the programme after being involved for several years in evangelism and discipleship work in the country.

"As I began to think and pray about it, I believed that God was saying that he wanted to hear the Ukrainians write their own songs to express their adoration to him, and to include the Ukrainian sounds too."

Subjects covered on the course include





ethnomusicology, crosscultural missions and communication, songwriting and biblical worldview. The group plan to make a recording of some of the songs they create, along with a songbook, to be made available to local churches.

Ukraine has a rich musical heritage, with special songs for every occasion. The music is usually played in a minor key, and songs tend to be composed without repetition of notes or lyrics. The bandura – a pear-shaped, stringed instrument – is often played.

"We need to be careful as Westerners how we introduce things to other cultures," said Hoodikoff. "Many developing countries have a poor image of their country, and who God wants them to be. Some Christian musicians here have told me they would much rather learn the Western style than play their 'primitive' music in church.

"One woman, a professional folk singer, was turned down by the worship group at her church because her voice did not fit the contemporary Western style being played."

Having spent time in the Ukraine the students will head for the Crimea to research traditional music there.
(YWAM News)

Laos

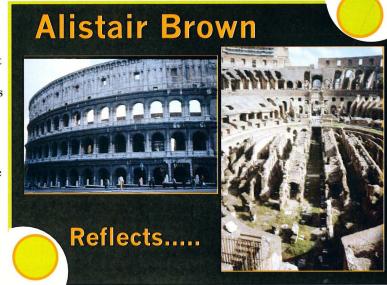
Intense persecution for Christians

Christians in Laos are suffering severe



persecution.

More than 100 Christian families from the Bru tribal group were warned at the end of the year that they faced eviction from their homes or deportation



Rome's Colosseum has to be one of the most awesome and moving places I've seen. That's with it in ruins. What must it have been like when it was first built around 79AD?

- space for 55,000 to 80,000, with so many stairways and exits it could be emptied in ten minutes
- what the tourist books grandiosely describe as a moveable roof – a massive canvas awning hauled into place on hot, sunny days
- like most of Rome the Colosseum was covered in marble (stripped away during the Dark Ages and burned to make lime for cement)
- the games inside included wild animal and gladiatorial fights and even battles between ships on water

What an amazing place. What a dreadful place.

In my mind I see cheering Romans perched on the edge of their seats, a massive circle of faces and wild roar of noise. I look below the old floor to the cells, cages and passages from which gladiators, prisoners and animals were brought up to the arena. I picture animals tearing human flesh. I imagine a gladiator holding his sword over his defeated opponent, asking the crowd to decide whether the beaten man lives or dies. I see fathers, mothers, children enjoying their day out, a family event.

And I weep for a world where people get pleasure from the pain of others, where some are seen as only of value for amusement. A world which still perpetrates evils as great as the Roman games, and where the greatest evil of all may be our contentment that our lives are fine. 'Shame for others', we think.

And I pray, "Come soon, Lord Jesus." But I pray first, "As long as you give me strength, God help me to change this world." ●

Alistair Brown is General Director of BMS



world news



from the country if they refused to sign documents renouncing their faith.

Elsewhere in Laos three civil servants were sacked from their jobs after they were forced to

sign a document renouncing their faith. In the same month six Christians were arrested during a Christian meeting, accused of an 'illegal gathering' and imprisoned.

Christian Hmongs - also known as Miaos - living in Laos and Vietnam are being tortured by having boiling water poured down their throats, and being beaten and imprisoned by Communist government officials who are using these brutal tactics in an attempt to find out who is supplying them with Bibles. They are also trying to force Christians to return to spirit worship and rebuild their demon altars.

The Luangprabang area of Laos has been designated by UNESCO as a 'World Heritage of the UN'. This has led to the assertion that this area should only have Buddhism as its religion. Many churches have been closed down and determined efforts have been made to wipe out Christianity from that area. (EMA/Open Doors)

CORRECTION from Jan/Feb mb. The image of a man in a bazaar (news story 'Closed countries: open hearts') was reproduced courtesy of FEBA Radio and not as printed. We apologise for this mistake.



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Non-formal Education in Nepal

A woman and girl learning by candle light is a common sight in Nepal. Many children are unable to attend school as they are busy all day in the fields, and many women grow up with no literacy skills.

Literacy opens doors. Learning numeracy skills and to read and write is a vital step towards selfreliance and empowerment. Such is its importance that the United Mission to Nepal (UMN) includes non-formal education (NFE) alongside many of its health and development projects.

For some women, NFE has offered them the chance to take skills training or to start micro-credit. For all it has enabled them to move about the city with confidence, reading bus destinations and hospital directions, to help children and grandchildren who are in school, and to communicate directly with husbands or sons working in India by being able to read and write in Nepali, the official language of communication, rather than speaking in only their own regional language.

BMS missionary Christine Preston is involved in training Nepali facilitators who, in turn, run NFE classes in villages alongside raising awareness of issues in health care and sanitation, and training people to problem solve. The impact has been seen most clearly in communities who have planned and implemented their own projects to install toilets or bring running water closer to their village.

Please send this month's card, with a message of support to Christine Preston, who will pass them on to the NFE facilitators:

Christine Preston

Yala Urban Health Programme (YUHP) Saugal, Lalitpur

Nepal.



OWEN CLARK CONTINUES HIS SERIES ON PRESENT AND FUTURE CHURCH LEADERSHIP IN THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO (FORMERLY ZAIRE)

tark and shocking, the report said that Kisangani was now in rebel hands and that soldiers were raping women and girls. Our minds flew to Justine, recently returned there from Kinshasa with a degree in Theology. Oh God, keep her safe!

The sixth of Pastor Botondo's seven children, Justine grew up and did her schooling at Yakusu, but failed her final year. Going to her older sister Josephine, a civil servant, in Kinshasa, she repeated it and got her State diploma. The door to further study was open.

At Yakusu Justine had felt God calling her to be a pastor, but

"At Yakusu, Justine had felt God calling her to be pastor but had told no-one."

had told no-one. Now, telling her family, they divided, some encouraging her vocation and others wanting her to be more practical. In the event, further studies were delayed by a serious medical condition necessitating surgery and chemotherapy.

When well again she began a course in Business Administration, Josephine paying her fees. Poor exam results, however, prompted a rethink, and she decided to follow her own convictions. For the next five years Justine worked for a degree at the Faculty of Theology, the first CBFC woman to do so. Josephine supported her until the salaries of civil servants dried up. An ECC scholarship helped for a while, but that too was cut off. Life was hard.

Whilst studying Justine learnt the ropes of being a pastor at Kitega church under Pastor Tutonda, displaying an independence of mind not always appreciated. A young woman of promise, certainly, but would such a bright, young, single female fit into a traditionally male domain when she graduated?

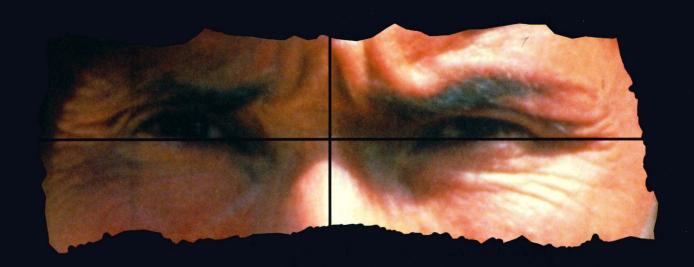
Eventually the Upper River Region solved the conundrum by making Justine regional evangelist, and she returned to Kisangani, travelling on the open deck of a boat – come rain, shine or mosquitoes.

Hardly had Justine's ministry begun when war intervened. The Kabila government, in power just over a year, now faced its own rebellion from the east, and before long Kisangani was taken and contact lost. In such circumstances no news is not necessarily good news.

Victorious armies, unless under tight discipline, feel free to help themselves to what they want from a defenceless population, including young women. Little can be done but pray. Oh God, restrain the violent! Protect the helpless! And may Justine be allowed to fulfil her promise.

Owen Clark is a church worker with BMS in the Democratic Republic of Congo

should we stay...



or should we go?

"Those who are greater risk takers should not stand in judgement of those who are not and visa versa"

mission dilemmas

A CHRISTIAN WORKER IN A CLOSED COUNTRY ENCOUNTERED THIS DILEMMA.

n July 1998 our organisation was faced with a crisis situation. Tension had mounted between the Non-Governmental Organisations and the ruling authorities over human rights issues and restrictive working conditions. Finally the majority of these humanitarian aid agencies felt they were left with no other choice but to evacuate from the country. We had to face the gut-wrenching question: should we also evacuate?

Our development organisation had been serving the people of this closed country for over a quarter of a century. In all that time, through periods of grave danger, we had remained working in the country. On occasion we had been forced to reduce our personnel, and often we were living and working under very trying circumstances, but to evacuate the entire team? It had happened only once before, after the murder of a husband and wife.

Over the years we have developed security guidelines to assess the threat of danger: security factors pertaining to communications, environment, military, work capability, food and drinking water, morale, health and spiritual factors, rated on security levels from 0 to 5. A level 5 under environment factors, for example, indicates a breakdown in law and order, increasing theft and threat of violence to personnel and medical services barely functioning. A level 5 under military factors indicates that sustained offensive operations and aerial bombardment are taking place, street fighting has intensified and all team members are confined to basements or secure areas. When level 5 is reached, most members of the team are strongly urged to evacuate. It is important to have this kind of objective standard in place because in the midst of a volatile situation, it is difficult to ascertain the

increasing risk involved. It also relieves the director from any guilt he may be experiencing due to feelings of abandoning the national staff and projects.

Key questions to answer when faced with the dilemma of evacuating or not are: What is achieved by going? What is achieved by staying? Who goes? Who stays? Some of the general principles to consider are:

Are we being targeted? The danger from random rocketing is quite different from the threat of being directly targeted.

Is there a strong anti-foreign sentiment? If there is, it is more likely that foreigners will be targeted. In that case, we would seriously look at evacuating non-essential personnel and lying low.

Is our presence endangering the lives of our national co-workers?

What is the morale of the team? Different people have different thresholds of coping with the stresses and strains of working in such an environment. Some people are greater risk takers than others and there needs to be a clear understanding and acceptance among the team that such is the case. Those who are greater risk takers should not stand in judgement of those who are not and visa versa.

In this crisis, four main factors led to our decision to evacuate all team members:

1 Interrogation by the authorities. When the religious police interrogated three of our members intensely, we wanted to protect other team members from undergoing a similar grilling. We felt that if others were interrogated and certain information was extracted, it could collectively be used against us. This was the primary reason for deciding it was time to go.

2 Impact of searches. The ruling authorities had started to search our headquarters and homes and several of our houses were then sealed. They informed us that they had found a large supply of sensitive material, which we did not believe was the true case. Nevertheless the cumulative

impact of the searches, sealing, opening and reclosing of our homes was taking a heavy toll.

3 Cumulative stress. The welfare of the team had to be considered. When one person in a key leadership role confided that she did not know how much more of this she could take, this signalled that others had probably reached their limit also. From experience we have seen that people may be able to cope during one crisis, but the cumulative effect of constant pressure, disruption, loss and change can be very exhausting.

4 National co-workers still imprisoned. This situation was very worrying to us. We did not know why they were being detained or what they had been accused of. We felt that in the current environment our co-workers could be endangered by our presence.

We acknowledged that we made mistakes and that the evacuation process could have been managed better, with clearer instructions and guidance given to all, but particularly to those for whom English is their second language. After much prayer and discussion with team members, the leadership wrote a detailed Emergency and Evacuation Plan which gives guidelines for personal, household and workplace preparation. When the next emergency occurs, a crisis management team will be appointed and ready to act.

Did we make the right decision? When we returned to our country of service, authorities wondered why we had gone. Did we have something to hide? We had agreed to stay, and by leaving with the other aid groups, they accused us of lying. We will never know for sure, but we trust God's guidance and for the sake of the team, evacuation was probably the wisest choice.

At present, the situation is still tense and the government is sending us mixed signals. We are learning to live with such ambiguity. It is only by God's grace that we are able to serve the people of this nation.

A BAPTIST CHURCH TEAM GOES ON MISSION TO AN ORPHANAGE IN CHINA

abies are dying in Chinese orphanages, not from physical neglect, but from the emotional need of love and cuddles they are not receiving. They give up crying because no-one responds and some have never learnt to smile because of lack of human contact. This was Ronny's impassioned plea when he preached from his heart about China and its people, and the opportunities for visiting an orphanage to give love to these babies. Anyone can go on a two or three week mission to the orphanage. You don't need special qualifications and age doesn't matter. Just loving a baby for a few days can bring that first smile. Later, Mary, my wife, said: "I want to go to the orphanage!" That was the start of forming a ten-person group with ages from 20 to 65 years.

One year later we arrived in Thailand for several days' orientation training before flying to East China with Lenny our group leader. China is a country that does not allow freedom of Christian expression. We came as tourists, but unknown to the authorities we were a group of Christians on a mission of love to a Chinese orphanage! During our orientation, Alistair asked, "How can this be a mission when we are not proclaiming the gospel?" Lenny, a one-time street evangelist replied, "You are to be living tracts with your lives reflecting the love of Jesus."

At our first meal in a restaurant, Lenny said grace with his eyes open, "They give up crying because no-one responds and some have never learnt to smile because of lack of human contact"

iving

"Thank you Boss for this food we are about to enjoy," and we responded, "so be it." Before going to the orphanage we prayed in code with our eyes open, not knowing whether the rooms were bugged! We sang quietly, choosing words that did not include God, Jesus or Holy Spirit. If we wanted a more intimate ministry time we closed the blinds and maybe windows as well. Devotions in China reminded us of how the early church in Acts met behind closed doors.

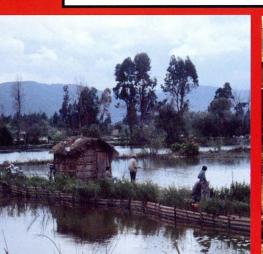
As we walked into the orphanage baby and toddler rooms for the first time, children rushed up to us with their arms outstretched, desperate for cuddles and attention, even from a group of strangers! Conditions were better than expected, but quite distressing to us was the children's lack of stimulation and of social opportunities, and the fact that most seemed traumatised from experiences in their short lives.

The 39 children were usually looked after by four Chinese workers who only had time to provide their basic physical care. This was where the team came in, to cuddle, play with, and show gentleness and love. In just two weeks the children's responses included smiling, less aggression, more interaction, and more play. We also worked with older children and children with special needs. Unknown to the authorities we prayed over each child we were with.

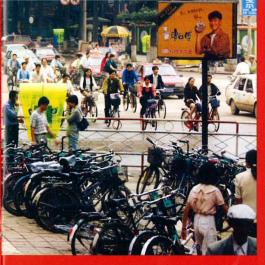
On the last day, the Director of the orphanage thanked us saying they had noticed the spirit in which we worked together, a spirit which they would like to copy. We could only praise God that his Spirit at work in us seemed to have challenged the Director and his staff. It was so hard to leave. We had to give the children back into God's care and be thankful that he had allowed us the privilege of loving these little ones for this short time.

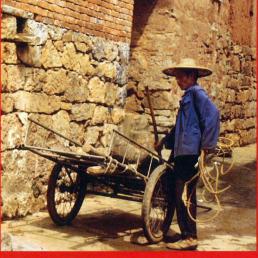
We went to China to make a difference to others lives, and on returning found that God had worked life-changing things in our lives! We had become different people with a new perspective of life.

NB. Some names, locations and minor details have been changed for their protection. For security reasons article remains anonymous.















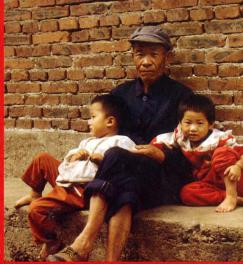


BACKGROUND TO CHINA'S ORPHANAGES

It is estimated that 100,000 orphanages exist in China today. China has been forced by its population growth and the necessity to avoid mass starvation to adopt a one child per family policy. Parents need permission to have a baby, and due to cultural traditions they want a boy to carry on the family name and to look after the grandparents in their old age. They pray for a boy, but if a girl is born some families give the baby to an orphanage or worse, leave the baby somewhere. This can also happen if a second child is born, even if a boy. Well-off families can have a second child if they pay the government the equivalent of about \$7000, but less well-off families cannot afford to do so. It is also considered a stigma if a handicapped child is born and these children often end up in orphanages.

The main hope for a normal future life for children in the orphanage is that of adoption by families in the West, including the UK. A total of 94 children were adopted during the past 12 months from this one orphanage. The adoption process can take about two years.





Further information can be obtained from Church Link Teams, PO Box 308, Luton, LU2 9YL

des

Photographs:

Right: Production of 'multifort' vitamins for the small

food processing co-operative A party at Mark and Suzana's Below: Suzana helps a patient

HOW DOES A MISSIONARY CHOOSE WHERE TO LIVE? TWO MISSIONARIES TELL THEIR STORIES

Mark Greenwood

"Vende-se din-din" – my knowledge of Portuguese easily deciphered the first part of the sign on a good part of the houses - For Sale - but the second half stumped me; was it short for rapidinho (quickly)? If so, it wouldn't be difficult finding a good purchase. The locals, in fact, were selling ice lollies, not their houses; it would be eight months before

"It has been very important to us to be part of the community in which we minister"

we moved into our home in Genibaú.

On the surface it seemed a challenge to live in this community. Members of our inviting church would rarely come here and advised against it. Favelas. they would say, are very dangerous places. It was soon obvious that the neighbours were great and over these four years they have become good friends. Through the church plant many of the members from the inviting

church have befriended our folk too: one lady has transferred her membership!

Given that we felt convinced God wanted us here, the true dilemmas were linked to fitting in properly; at the same time being comfortable enough to work properly. For instance, we wanted a house built in a way that let in enough light. We managed, even with just one window, as the layout is good.

As the waste water runs down the street we wanted to be on the dry side. We were also able to find a street where everyone has a decent cess pit. A good bathroom was also one of our demands - we made one.

Domestic appliances taxed us a little. We decided to start with almost nothing, get an idea of what people around us had, and build up accordingly. In were the fridge, a liquidiser (almost every Brazilian has one), a radio-cassette recorder, and a luxury we couldn't live without - and which became a minor tourist attraction - the washing machine.

With the passage of time, several factors have increased our quota. but we still struggle between comfort and modesty, aware that some neighbours have much less than others. Television and a sound system seem standard in most front rooms; we have made those acquisitions. After a couple of years a car became a necessity for church and health work, although the entrance hall proved a squeeze as garage and "ambulance" station. As with many neighbouring houses, ours

went upwards. However, upstairs has been used mainly for work, housing a small food processing co-operative. When we arrived back from home assignment the big trend was super cheap telephone connections, so we're expecting ours to be installed in the next few weeks. It will be a sad goodbye

The rewards of living here have been innumerable, despite frustrations. It has been very important to us to be part of the community in which we minister. None of our dilemmas could be considered as sacrifices; living here has helped our work and given us happy memories. The only sign on the front of our house informs people that a nurse lives here. We certainly aren't looking to sell up "rapidinho."

Greenwood is a BMS missionary involved

work in Brazil.

in community and church

Pam Bryan

The advertisement read "Regional Representative required the person is to be based in Africa". The Lord called me to this job and so seven years after leaving Congo I will be going back to live in Africa As the previous Regional Rep lived in Didcot, there is no base in place in Africa. Doing the job means that I will be travelling in

and looked at the area near to Johannesburg Airport. The housing was very comfortable and life could have been good, but I knew that it wasn't the right place.

At the moment the whites normally live in white areas surrounded by barbed wire fences. "Typical" Africa is Luanda the capital of Angola, a country which has been at war during the

"The housing was very

COMfortable and life could

have been good, but I knew it

wasn't the right place"

Africa for about six months of the year. It means that I need to be in constant touch with both national partners and with our missionaries. So I need to find a country with a good airport, with more or less direct flights going to and from as many places as possible. I also need a place with good communications systems – it's not much good to everyone in countries like Angola if when their erratic telephone system works, mine doesn't! I also need a city which has a lots of other Embassies, so that I can get my visas easily.

Before I came to Didcot homework had already been done on location and South Africa seemed a good possibility. It seemed to have everything I needed and so I made a visit in September



lifetime of the majority of the population, a country which is racked by pain and yet a country full of exuberant, courageous people. I visited in December and realised anew that this is my "Africa".

So where shall I live? Well it's a big continent! I started with a clean sheet and worked my way through my list of

needs. I came up with cities like
Nairobi, Dar es Salaam, Kampala,
Dakar and Adidjan. But there's more to
consider – the future of the BMS work
in Africa and our strategy with its
emphasis on reaching the
unevangelised. West Africa is the least
evangelised part of sub-Saharan African
and in many of the countries the
majority of the population is Muslim.
What is amazing is that the majority of
these countries are open to Christian
mission.

So I'm off to Abidjan in the Ivory Coast to check it out. Is this the right city, Lord?

Pam Bryan is BMS Regional Secretary for Africa



Photographs: Above: In South Africa Pam could have had a house with a swimming pool, like this one. Below left: A house in Pretoria, South Africa, which Pam looked at.

Below right: A typical South African urban scene





JOHN & LYNNE THOMPSON

SPENT 11 MONTHS WORKING IN NORTH AFRICA AS VOLUNTEERS WITH BMS. HERE THEY RELATE SOME OF THE DILEMMAS THAT CONFRONTED THEM.

Is being here enough?

In North Africa it's not easy for a national to change the religion they were born into, whether it's a change to become a Hindu, a Muslim or a Christian. Anyone doing this will be viewed with great suspicion by their friends, and it may mean a break in family ties.

Christianity is viewed here as a new and Western religion, whereas in fact there is a large Christian heritage in North Africa. Some very well-known Early Church bishops came from this part of the world! Unfortunately Christianity gets a bad press, and that makes people all the more disparaging. For national Christians today, any contact with foreigners can lead to questioning by family members and police.

So we were constantly faced with the question: All I can do is be here; is my presence here enough?

Eating meat which is sacrificed

Every year the end of the Muslim feast of Ramadan is celebrated by most families by slaughtering a sheep; cooking and eating the meat and offering pieces of cooked meat to friends and neighbours, including foreign Christians.

Bearing in mind that almost the entire population observes Ramadan, but many of the people are not Muslims, the Christian has to decide whether to accept the gift of meat in the spirit of friendship in which it is offered, or to reject it and risk alienating that family which probably is a family

you are trying to befriend. Again, this is not a new dilemma!

The neighbours we had opposite school had just finished killing their family sheep as I arrived to prepare for school – they greeted me warmly and said they would bring some across for us. What should I do? One hour later, they came across with cooked meat, bread, herbs and big smiles! We accepted with thanks and the children and ourselves ate thankfully, grateful to God for friends and kind neighbours.

Observing Muslim festivals

In North Africa people usually work a five day week, Monday to Thursday as normal, Friday morning and Saturday morning. This emphasises that Friday is the Muslim holy day and enables those who wish to, to attend the mosque. In addition, there are several Muslim festivals during the year which are marked by a public holiday. During Ramadan, work hours are considerably reduced.

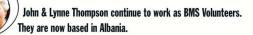
Women are given special working hours to allow them to go home to help prepare the daily feast for their family and friends. One male teacher we knew said quite openly that Ramadan was a non-work month for him; he did the



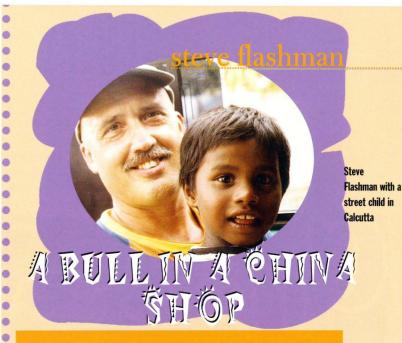
absolute minimum to keep his job. He supervised newly qualified teachers – so they had a relaxed month! By observing these holidays and not eating in public during the hours of daylight, do the Christian workers compromise their distinctive witness, or as guests in the country should they respect the national holidays? Travelling by long distance bus in Ramadan we took the decision not to eat or drink for the journey – about four to five hours – mainly because it was not a good idea to draw attention to oneself and men who are used to drinking 20 cups of coffee each day and chain smoke are not very happy by the afternoon of the day!

At sunset everyday, a rocket went up from the local mosque to indicate time for food and drink. Our neighbours would run home, shops would shut instantly and the owner drive home at top speed. What should you do? (We and our co-workers ate indoors, one colleague worked at the health centre and took a flask of coffee by herself in her office). Holidays were easier, as it was

possible to go to a tourist area and blend in with the holiday makers.







STEVE FLASHMAN

o you're off on a 'mission' trip to Africa! Wonderful!

Don't forget the multi-coloured shorts, flip flops,
designer sun glasses (preferably mirror shades), the
Pentax with a large zoom lens of course, so that you
can get 'unobtrusive' pictures of the locals, vest top Tshirts to make the most of the suntan and pith helmet for that
safari opportunity!

Wrong to all of the above!

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Unfortunately the horror stories abound about well-meaning Christians doing their bit for world mission in astoundingly inappropriate ways — and more often than not, it's because of a total lack of preparation in terms of cultural orientation. This is the obvious danger when local churches decide to send a team to visit one of 'their' missionaries on the field - a commendable thing to do, but so often approached with little or no thought that the people we are going to meet will be very different from us and we will be on their territory, not ours! We need an understanding of local culture not just in terms of the way we conduct ourselves but also in terms of our methods of evangelism. Each culture demands a different approach. For instance, an overtly evangelistic stance in the barrios of South America could reinforce the attitudes of the poor indigenous peoples towards us rich, domineering Westerners because of the oppression and abuse caused by 'Christian' invaders. In Africa anyone can get 'results' through holding mass rallies which look great as statistics on a prayer letter, but perhaps not so effective in terms of discipleship. In India we should be encouraging local cultural forms of worship and church practice rather than the imported forms of Christianity which have resulted in irrelevant expressions of church in a culture which is fast disowning Westernised Christianity.

More and more people are getting involved in world mission.

My plea is that we work hard at being culturally sensitive and relevant in what we do and how we do it.

The bull in a china shop approach might give vent to our enthusiasm, but can only end in damage and disaster for the very missionaries we want to support.

Steve Flashman is a Baptist minister and International Director of Soapbox Expeditions

More Circle Chan answers

JAN KENDALL
REPORTS ON THE
DILEMMAS THAT
CONFRONTED
CHRISTIANS IN ONE
TOWN AFTER A
MAJOR DISASTER

road to recovery is underway, not everything is as straightforward as it seems.

To start at the beginning: 1998 was a year of rain. The monsoon season in Butwal was the worst in living memory. In the past the monsoon has meant a day of rain followed by a day with no rain. But in 1998 the rains started a month earlier and then it rained, and

rained, sometimes

ou've had a local disaster, which has made homes and other buildings, including your church, unusable. The government of the country showed concern. The Prime Minister came to see the damage and offered help to those affected, including the offer of land for those new homeless, and would you

damage and offered help to those affected, including the offer of land for those now homeless, and, would you believe it, land on which to rebuild the church. This really is a first for Nepal – where the Government is nervous about Christian activity. Help has been forthcoming from other sources too, including overseas, and whilst the slow

continuously for 20 or 25 hours without a break. So the springs on the hillsides started running, and soon the ground had soaked up an enormous amount of water.

As the ground became saturated, it became unstable. The road from

Butwal to Tansen Hospital became blocked by landslides, and people came back to Butwal with stories about how they had to run through falling rocks to get home. The rains should have ended in August, but in September it was still raining just as hard.

One Saturday in September, the hill behind the town – the part of town which is cool, and where richer people want to live – started to crumble. The Christians had met for worship at Joyti church, as they normally do on their day off work.

After it was over, a church member, who had not been at the service, came rushing in. "The hill is starting to go," she cried, "there are rocks coming down, and our house is threatened." Young men from the church rallied together to form a rescue party. But by the time they arrived, most of the damage had been done. People listening for falling rocks spoke in whispers, and the rocks came down, some of them weighing a tonne. Two rooms of the church member's house survived: the rest had gone. Other houses were damaged, smothered with stones, and one was buried up to its roof. People were taking out their belongings and moving them

away - anywhere, just to get them out of the way.

Along with the stones came the mud and water. Rescuers were wading through inches of muddy water, rushing down the hillside into people's houses, so that they were flooded up to a metre deep.

Altogether 41 houses were substantially damaged and another 100 rendered unfit for habitation. The Government reacted quickly with the offer of land, but so did the landlords in the town where rents just about doubled overnight. People cannot

afford these rents so some are, in effect, forced back into homes which are neither safe nor truly habitable. One man, looking around at the

devastation

from his flat roof, said, "Well, if it rains, we'll wake up in time; we just have nowhere to go except back here!"

Even the offer of land is not without its complications. Who should be helped? Clearly those whose homes now lie buried and destroyed under the boulders weighing tons and up to two metres of mud, they are a priority. But some of them did not own the land on which they had built the house - do you compensate the absentee landowner?

And what about the church building - is the best way of showing the love of God to the people of Butwal through the spending of money on a building? Should a priority be to give money away? Paradoxically, in a western country, we might say 'yes' very readily, but in Asian culture, in spite of the poverty, respect for your faith is very much tied up with the respect you show for the place of worship, be it temple, mosque or church.

Lots of questions and no clear answers. But positive things do come out of negative situations. Many of the Christians in Butwal, who have lost so much in material terms, have shown themselves rich in love and concern

towards those who are penniless and homeless.

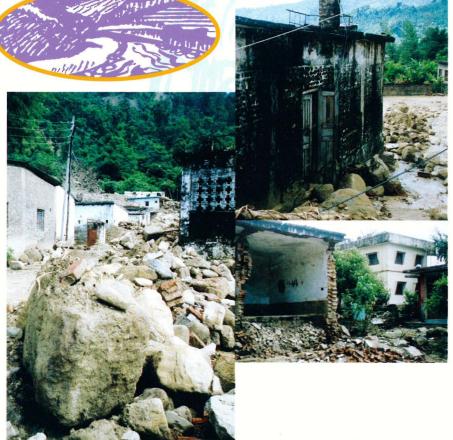
Life throws up unexpected dilemmas, with no easy answers, but even as we struggle together with these issues, there is much gained, not least in our understanding of what it means to be God's community of people in Nepal.

Jan Kendall is BMS Editorial Co-ordinator and mh Editor

"Is the best wav of showing the love of God to the people of **Butwal** through the spending money building?"



Photographs: Devastation in Butwal after the floods



Chandraghona

A SERIES EDITED BY JAN KENDALL THAT LOOKS AT TOWNS AND CITIES - AND VILLAGES - AROUND THE WORLD WHERE BMS PERSONNEL ARE WORKING

BY SUE HEADLAM

History

Dr G O Taylor started medical work

built; and then in 1930 an operating theatre followed. Major surgical cases were operated on and the fame of the hospital began to spread, not only in the Hill Tracts, but also in Chittagong District. In 1937 a Nursing Training School was started and now runs government as well as junior nursing courses for 60 boys and girls. The Leprosy Hospital was also started in 1913 and a new hospital built in 1986. The Community Health outreach programme started in 1971 and serves with Under Fives Village Clinics in the surrounding area.

Photograph: An Under **Fives Clinic**



at Chandraghona in 1907. The hospital then was a mud and bamboo hut situated beside the Karnaphuli river in a clearing in the forest. Dr Taylor left Chandraghona because of ill health and Dr G O Teichman joined as Medical Officer in 1911 and faithfully served until 1939. He was the main architect of the expansion of medical work at Chandraghona.

In 1927 a small female ward was

The local bazaar and shops have built up around the needs of the hospital staff and families living on the compound - now the population has grown to 300 families. A nearby paper mill used to give employment to many men, but this is now gradually closing down. Bamboo used to be floated 15km down the river from the dam at Kaptai to be used as pulp. The supply of bamboo is also greatly reduced.

First Impressions

by Don Foster

I arrived in Chittagong at 2.30pm after a six hour train journey from Dhaka. Then on to Chandraghona a bustling single street village beside a large river.

When I awoke the next morning I thought I was in a little bit of Britain. The view over the hospital towards the river was delightful. Then Sue (Headlam) mentioned that she was concerned about the crack appearing in the ground. I hoped her house would not fall over that day, because I might be in it!

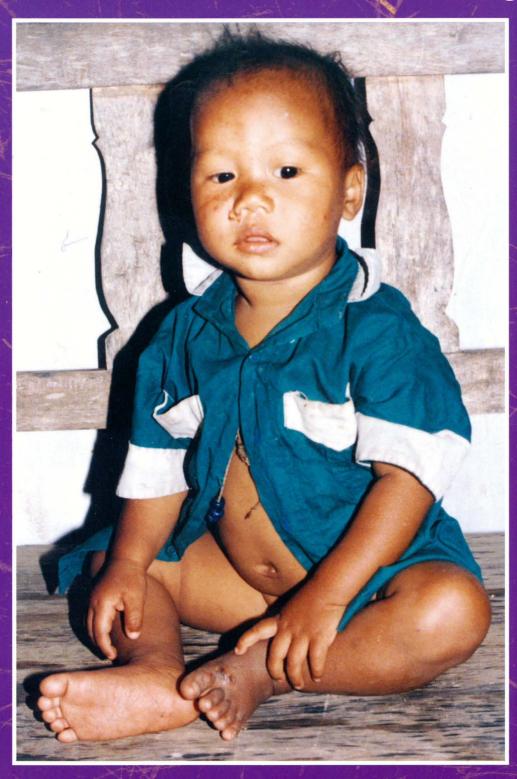
The pace of life was relaxed. Women in black with their matching umbrellas to shade them from the hot sun crossed the river in boats, as they returned from the clinic.

Authoi invited me for a cup of tea. His house was halfway up the hillside and as it was my first visit, he was like a cat on hot bricks. Having lived in a bamboo shack which let in the rain at every opportunity, he was now building his mansion! Today the roof was being done. We sat in the wooded hillside overlooking the house admiring the work of 30 men. It was a concrete roof, and the quality was good. I could have stayed longer, but he urged me to scramble up the hill.

"We picnic here. Many people come from round about."

It was a plateau and we could see beyond the paper mill into the Rangamatti Hill Tracts. The grass was green and lush. Some boys playing cricket had lost their ball.

Was I really in Bangladesh? No wonder Sue has been there for so long! As a mere tourist volunteer escaping the rigours of Dhaka, I found it surprising she is not mentioned in the Lonely Planet Guide.



Christian Scene

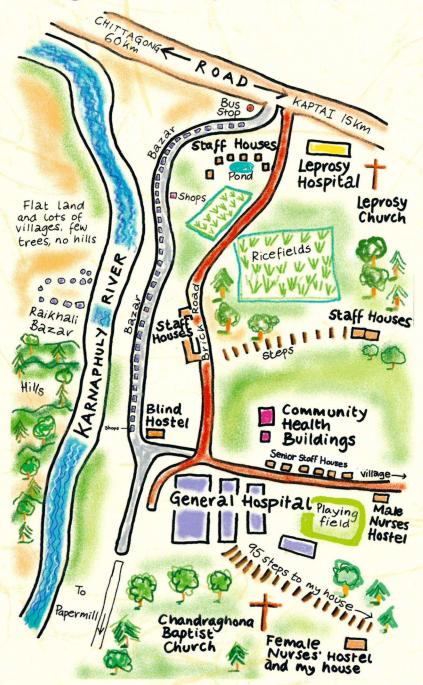
There are two churches, both Baptist. The Leprosy Church serves the staff of the Leprosy Hospital with their families and any patients who attend. The General Hospital Church is bigger with an 8.30am Sunday service attended by around 150 people – staff and their families. There is a women's meeting on a Friday afternoon and a Wednesday

evening prayer meeting which is held in a different home each week. At the church services women sit on the left side, men on the right, and shoes are left at the door. The music is provided by harmonium and tobla (drums) and some young people get together as a "singing group". Any offering is auctioned off after church for church funds eg vegetables, chicken, first cow's milk etc.

People mix

There is a mixture of Bengalis and tribal people who have different ethnic origins but get along well in Chandraghona. Love marriages amongst staff have resulted in many mixed marriages. There are 13 different tribes in the Hill Tracts and nearly all are represented in the students and staff at Chandraghona.

Chandraghona village and hospital compound







Employment

Many are employed in the hospital. Some own shops in the bazaar or are employed in the village stalls. There are local school teachers, several doctors in private practice, medicine shop owners, laboratory owners, all of whom earn a good living. A few are still employed at the paper mill. Some people farm their

own land for rice. Chandraghona is famous for its hospital. The Weaving Centre for "at risk" women is an income generating scheme which is part of the Community Health Programme.

Leisure

Being a village, people make their own entertainment. The young boys play

football, cricket and badminton in the cool season. Women stay at home and sew and embroider pillow cases, saree blouses and often make their childrens' clothes. Karam, a board game, is popular, especially amongst men and can be seen in tea shops in the bazaar.

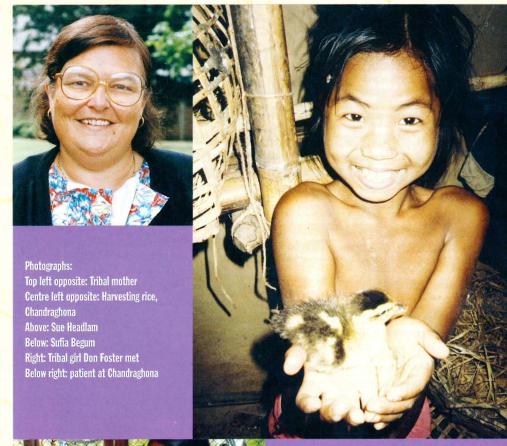
Some medical statistics

Chandraghona has:

- one hospital
- six doctors in the hospital
- 20 doctors in the local bazaar
- one physiotherapist in the hospital to help with the disabled
- no social workers
- no help for the aged
- three primary and two high schools
- one hostel for four blind boys who go to the local high school for integrated education. They have extra classes in Braille at the hostel.

Profiles

Sufia Begum is 17 years-old. She lives across the river from Chandraghona. Both of her parents are dead and she is left as the eldest of four sisters so she has the responsibility for the family. They live in a small bamboo hut with a straw floor and all live in one room. They have a lean-to which acts as a cooking room and they cook on an earth stove using firewood. Sufia came to the weaving centre looking for work to support her sisters. In time we were able to train her up, first as a spinner and now she has her own loom. She enjoys the work with the other weavers and is able to earn an income to feed herself and her sisters. Sufia has matured and gained in confidence in the two years she has been with us and we know that she has been rescued out of the poverty trap. There are many like Sufia on our weaving project.









Hello, our names are (left to right) Jui, Sally, Shorna, Tulie and Bubbly. We are all eight years-old and our parents work in Christian Hospital Chandraghona. We are on our way to school which lasts from 8.00am to 12.00 noon five days a week. In this photo we are not wearing school uniform because we have an exam and can wear what we like.



BMS VOLUNTEERS

The Smallest Detail

ЈО ТООК

Jo Took, a 23-year-old primary school teacher from London was three months into a one year placement teaching in North Africa when an accident brought her home for an operation. Here she writes about some of her experiences during that initial period.

pending three months living and working overseas was an experience that affected me in so many ways. Here is a brief outline of just one of the many lessons that I learnt while I was away, and which continues to be developed as I wait in hope of returning to North Africa as soon as I can.

Before I went away, I was fortunate enough to get the chance to talk to somebody who had just returned from a year's work in a place very near to where I was to be going. I remember very clearly her telling me that during her time overseas, she found that she had learnt to rely on God in a totally new way. I remember being curious about this, and somehow expecting that she meant that she came into a deeper spiritual communion with the Lord in some kind of super-holy-muchpondering-and-contemplation type way. But when I got to North Africa and began trying to live my life there, it became obvious within the first couple

of weeks that this was not what she had meant at all.

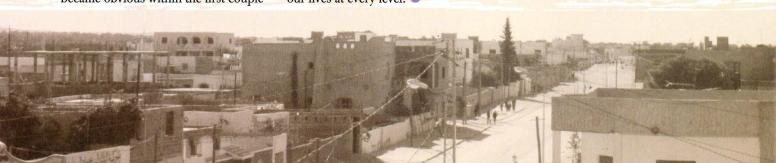
I found myself in a situation where I had no idea how to do the simplest things in life - the type of things that we take for granted every day of our lives, like buying a loaf of bread or catching a bus or even how to greet people without offending them. Not only did I have absolutely no idea of the language, but the cultural difference seemed immense and I felt entirely helpless to interpret or react to anything going on around me. It was very much like being five years old again, except a hundred times more frustrating because I felt that these were things I should be able to manage, since at home they were second nature.

So, I had no choice but to rely very much on my co-workers who had experience of how to live in that place, and ultimately, I found that I had to rely on God to help me through every part of each day. I learned to begin each day by praying to the Lord to be with me and help me through the simplest of things, like walking down the street or buying a ticket for the metro or a loaf of bread. Not surprisingly, he stayed right by my side throughout all of these things and because of this, my times of prayer, both intercession and thanksgiving, were greatly enriched. God was working in my life down to the smallest detail and in a more obvious and practical way that I had ever experienced or imagined. Our God is a real God and he wants to be involved in our lives at every level.













action teams

BMS 28:19 ACTION TEAMS

Claire Barraclough, Emily O'Brien, Ben Norbury and David Edge are coming to the end of their six months in Thailand as part of a 28:19 Action Team. They have been teaching English to theology students at the Bangkok Institute of Theology (BIT) through friendship and conversation as well as working in local churches and schools. Here they share some of their thoughts and experiences from the early weeks of their stay.



We are having a great time over here. We've experienced everything from huge Buddhist temples in the mountains, monks riding on the back of motorbikes, cockroaches hiding in my shirts, singing at a Karen hill tribe funeral, amazing scenery up north as well as sneaking over the Burmese border SIX times in ten seconds. (Does putting one foot over the border count as sneaking across?) We've also been eating some nasty food like chicken's feet, fish head and MARROWS. Generally, in the parts of Thailand we go to, we are the only westerners around for miles, so we get a lot of stares, giggles and screaming children. Being just about the only person with blue eyes and light hair around does have some advantages. Thai people tell me I look like Leonardo DiCaprio, Michael Owen and David Beckham! Dave

Claire

The work is going quite well and I'm really beginning to settle in. I've started to make friends at BIT and I'm



gradually picking up more of the language. This week I learnt how to say 'I smell good and you smell really bad' a phrase that kept me amused for hours! I'm also becoming addicted to pineapple, which they sell here on street stalls for about 10p for half a pineapple. Later today is Patana, otherwise known as chores, so we'll be doing battle with the red ants! While on the subject of killing creepy crawlies, I have to say that I'm becoming a bit of a lethal weapon when it comes to cockroaches!

Claire



Ron

We are becoming pros at coming up with ideas and material at the last minute (with a lot of Gods guidance), when we've been chucked in at the deep end to do a Sunday school the next day or having to do a lesson for two hours when we thought we had it for one. Now that everything is settling down there is a lot less need for that and God is also giving us ideas. Pra jau uae phaun (may God bless you – phonetics of course I've no idea of Thai script).

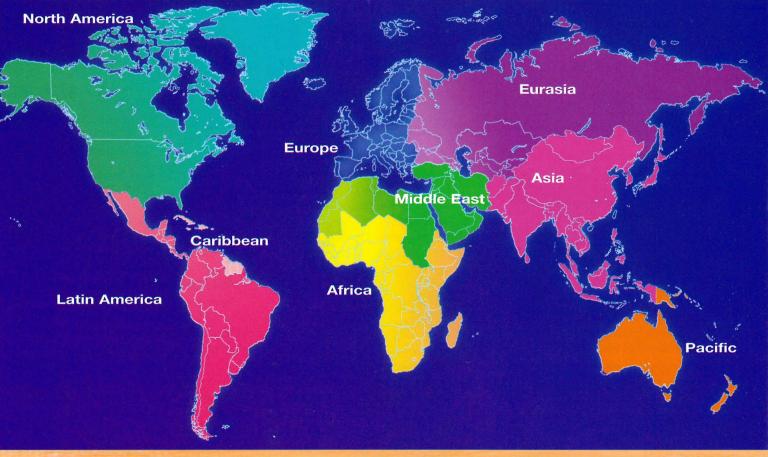
Emily

Winter's definitely on its way - it must be about 25° over here! It's quite humorous seeing all the BIT students wearing their warm jackets etc. Our time at BIT is really enjoyable and the students are just lovely! We're gradually picking up more and more Thai too! What a cool language! Just quite embarassing when you get the tone wrong and call someone a horse, rather than thanking them! One of the girls in our class is a pop star! She has an album out and everything! Be sure to let us know if 'Raffy Nancy' (Raffy's her older brother) ever make it to the UK. In His hands



resources for leaders





Region P	opulation	A	ffiliate	d	Total	People	es in R	egion
	in millions	Christia	n perce	ntages	Number of	V	Vorld	
	1995	Total	Prot	Evang	Peoples	A	В	C
Africa	557.9	48.1	20.2	13.2	3168	1074	975	1119
Asia	3209.3	7.3	3.9	3.1	2658	1607	503	548
Caribbean	37.8	69.2	16.5	11.1	287	15	83	189
Eurasia	290.5	45.8	1.1	0.9	596	306	104	186
Europe	514.8	77.2	18.3	2.8	1083	120	176	787
Latin America	455.8	90.9	12.1	11.1	1233	96	261	876
Middle East	378.1	4.6	0.6	0.4	889	558	159	172
North America	284.8	70.7	40.6	27.9	427	28	48	351
Pacific	28.4	66.8	37.0	15.8	1533	111	237	1185
WORLD	5757.3	30.1	9.2	5.7	11874	3915	2546	5413

Notes:

World A

Nations and peoples in the least evangelised world. Defined as those nations and peoples that are less than 50 per cent evangelised as defined in the World Evangelisation Database compiled by Dr David Barrett and team. Roughly corresponds to what is known as the '10/40 Window' (the area of Africa and Asia between the 10th and 40th degree of latitude).

World E

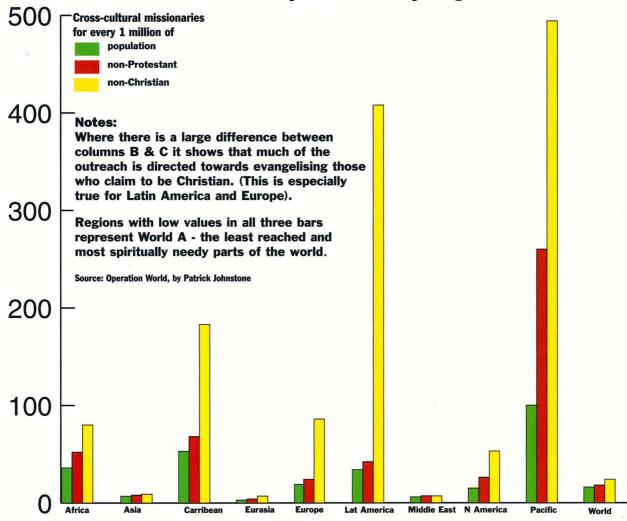
Nations and peoples in the evangelised non-Christian world. Defined as those nations and peoples that are more than 50 per cent evangelised and less than 60 per cent Christian (including all major Christian groups).

Nations and peoples in the Christian world. Defined as those nations and peoples that are more than 60 per cent professing Christian. This includes all nominal and affiliated Christians of all ecclesiological traditions and not only Protestants.

Source: Operation World, by Patrick Johnstone



Protestant Missionary Presence by Regions of the World



What are the main hindrances to mission?

(Tick all that apply)

- countries not issuing visas for missionaries
- ☐ Hinduism
- places where open evangelism and church planting are illegal
- □ illiteracy
- □ national governments opposing missionary work
- ☐ materialism
- □ Islam
- □ damage done by colonial powers
- ☐ isolated communities and people groups
- ☐ lack of prayer
- complacency
- □ Buddhism
- □ countries where conversion to Christianity is illegal
- urbanisation
- ☐ lack of confidence in the gospel
- ☐ tribal religions
- me not making myself fully available to God





projects & prayer focus

ects





Project 9020 **Grant to River** Amazon ministry for £7,200

The state of Rondônia in the southwest corner of the Amazon basin was only created in 1981.

Transport in this partially deforested region is by both road and river. The Evangelism and Social Action Department of the Rondônia Baptist Convention has a boat ministry along several tributaries of the River Amazon, north of Porto Velho, the capital. It's

called the Eric Nelson III ministry, and its aim is to reach lives along these rivers with the message of the gospel

and to give social help. The team on



board consists of a doctor, a dentist and preacher/evangelists.

In 1998 two journeys were made; the first in January up the River Machado visiting the communities in Itacoã, São Carlos, Calama, Maicí, Nazaré, Lago do Cuniã and Terra Caída, and the second

in July, visiting these and other places. The Jesus film was shown five times, Christian literature was distributed and medical help given.

Six journeys are planned for 1999 along the Rivers Madeira, Machado, Maicí, and Jamuri.

BMS has a partnership with the Rondônia **Baptist** Convention,

and gives a grant each year to help carry out this ministry.

If you would like to know more about how you or your church could support a BMS Project, please contact **BMS Projects Administrator Ruth** Berry on 01235 517700.

PRAYER FOCUS ©



Linda and Kevin Donaghy: Barreiro, Portugal

Kevin and Linda were relocated from Brazil to Portugal in July 1997 to take over the pastorate of a small church in Barreiro (nine members) and to begin a new work in the nearby town of Montijo. The church at Barreiro recently joined the Baptist Convention after 19 years in existence as an independent church. During that time they had become isolated from other Baptist work and so were not aware of what was going on in the wider church world. One of Kevin and Linda's tasks has therefore been to broaden the horizons of the church members and help them to see that they can do evangelism themselves. Some of the changes which have occurred since the couple arrived are: changing the hours of the service (from 9.00pm), opening the communion table to any believer from an evangelical church, contributing to home mission, opening a bank account in the name of the church, buying an OHP and screen, members leading services, forming links with other evangelical churches in the town, opening a children's club, having official elections for Deacons and doing door to door distribution of tracts and invites to special services. Links with other churches have gone very well, with pulpit exchanges and the building of bridges with another independent Baptist church from which the Barreiro church split 20 years ago.

Please pray:

Thank God for the building of good relationships with other churches and

church leaders. Pray God will bless this fellowship.

Thank God for the new ideas Kevin and Linda have been able to implement at the church, and pray they will have wisdom in knowing how to continue moving forward under God's guidance.

Pray for God's protection over the fellowship and against any spiritual



Roger and Nikki Pearce: Tirana, Albania

Roger and Nikki are agricultural and health facilitators living in the capital, Tirana. Nikki felt privileged to be able to assist her friend who gave birth to her second child in Tirana. The mother was delighted at how smoothly the birth went compared to her first time and felt conditions in Tirana were much better than in Fier, where her first child was born. Nikki however was horrified by the apparent lack of care displayed by the hospital personnel. She says: "Although we were surrounded by midwives, a doctor and paediatrician, they made it so obvious they were only there for the money, and I was shocked at how they played on pain and fear for extracting extra payment. Given how difficult the situation was, I was therefore so impressed by how amazingly Shpresa coped with the pain, knowing that all that was available to her was the paracetamol we had given her earlier. As I contemplated the experience, I compared it with the midwifery unit I had worked in in Newcastle and I realised how high my expectations are of the care pregnant ladies should receive. However, for so many ladies in Albania, pregnancy is still such a dangerous time, fraught with worry, uncertainty and undoubtedly, excruciating pain..."

Please pray

Thank God for the knowledge and

training of people like Nikki and Roger and pray for openings for them to share their skills in training others.

Thank God for the safe arrival of baby Samueli Koca and pray for him, mum Shpresa and dad Bertie as they struggle to live day to day in this troubled land



Colin and Marcia Pavitt: Eldorado, Brazil

In June 1998, the Pavitts' church in Eldorado launched "Projecto Crianca" (children's project) taking children off the streets from 2.00 to 5.00pm and providing a programme of education and activities to supplement the schooling they receive earlier in the mornings. The programme is run by volunteers and varies daily to cover such things as gardening, painting, school studies and even outings to MacDonalds. The Brazilian education system works well for average or above average ability children but there is no organised system for the many requiring extra support. One of the project's boys is 15. He repeated first grade three times and is now repeating second grade for the fourth time. No one from the school or society has taken the trouble to find out why he has learning difficulties and how he can be helped. Unfortunately, as with many of the children, child abuse is part of his problem. He is now receiving extra help at the project in the basics of Portuguese and Maths so hopefully he can make some progress in the next year. Marcelo is 11. The town's social service department asked the project to take him on as his single parent mother was not coping looking after him. He had developed the habit of stealing and selling her things. She had to go out to work every day and was therefore locking him in the house. He was doing badly at school too with consistent results of less than 25 per cent. With the help of Marcia and the

prayer focus & people worldwide

project volunteers, his results are now up to 75 per cent and they are working on his bad habits. Of the project, Colin and Marcia say: "It is very energy and time consuming, but wonderful to see signs of hope in children that are otherwise destined to lives of misery, vice and possibly crime."

Please pray:

thank God for those willing to give their time and love to taking care of these

pray for wisdom for the workers in knowing how to help each individual child, especially those scarred by abuse of many

pray for energy for those involved in this exhausting work



Irene and Alex Black: Chiang Rai, Thailand

Both Alex and Irene teach English at the Sahasartsuka School. The school provides basic education in a Christian setting for children whose mother tongues are the various hill tribe languages. The Thai curriculum is followed although Christianity is taught instead of Buddhism and all subjects, except the Blacks' English classes, are taught in the official Thai language. Alex and Irene teach children aged 10 to 15 and also run evening English classes for school and hostel staff and for local Christians. Nine hostels provide accommodation for the students. Eight are sponsored by christian organisations and individual students are supported by sponsorship from the West through an organisation called Compassion. Without this support, the children's families would not be able to afford an education for their children. Standards of care at the hostels vary greatly and Irene and some of the other Thailand Baptist Missionary Fellowship (TBMF) workers have been discussing the

possibility of offering a training course to hostel parents. The school also offers a home and education to some AIDS infected orphans. Often they are not welcome in their own villages and other schools refuse to take them. All-year hostel provision needs to be found for these children and special care may also need to be set up as numbers increase.

Please pray:

for God's guidance on whether to set up the training programme and for the hostel parents to be willing to take on the extra workload if it is right

thank God for the love and care received by the AIDS orphans and pray for wisdom in knowing what type of special care to set up for these children

povernment funding for a new building was cancelled due to cutbacks. Pray that following a visit by Education Department officials to the school, this would be reinstated



Owen and Deanna Clark, Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo

Owen and Deanna were due to retire in 1998, but requested an extension of service as there were no replacements to hand their work over to in Congo, and the Baptist community there was preoccupied with changes in leadership at the time. This meant they had not had the opportunity to finish, pack up and say their farewells (very important in Bantu culture) before heading to the UK for six months of Home Assignment. After discussions with BMS, the Clarks agreed to return to Kinshasa for a period of about 18 months as from the end of January 1999. This would allow them time to consolidate their church planting and development work and for the BMS and the CBFC (Baptist Community of the River Congo) to consider how to go on from there. At the time of writing,

medical clearance and an official invitation from the CBFC were being awaited and the couple were planning to fly to Congo on 1 February.

Please pray:

for wisdom for BMS and CBFC as they plan the way ahead for the work the Clarks have been involved in. If the decision is to look for nationals or other missionaries to continue the work, pray the right people would be found quickly.

expanding prayer focus. BMS personnel introduce friends and acquaintances whom they meet

from day to day.

Jules Bayang, Massy, France Jules featured in mb (Nov/Dec 1997) as part of the Our town series, looking at Massy, France. He is a part of Massy Baptist church and was baptised on Easter Sunday a couple of years ago.

To update the situation, the biggest change in Jules' life over the last 18 months has been his getting married to Véronique. Their friendship blossomed into romance, and they were married at Massy Baptist Church at the end of last June.

Véronique comes originally from the French West Indies. She recently qualified as a social worker, and now works as a debt collector.

Within the church Jules and Véronique head up a new joint youth



people worldwide

group for the 15s to 18s in conjunction with the Baptist church in Antony, a town three miles to the north of Massy. Neither church would have had a large enough number of teenagers in this age bracket on its own to make a viable group, but the joint group has got off to a flying start.

Jules and Véronique are well suited to this role. Véronique's bent for organisation means that everything runs smoothly, and Jules' passion for sport he competes at regional level in martial arts - gives him plenty of common ground with the teenagers.

Phil Halliday (BMS church worker in Massy, France)



Resham Rana, Tansen, Nepal

Resham is a young man of 27 and is currently the only full-time worker at Tansen church, one of the town's two churches. He became a Christian from a Hindu family who promptly rejected him for doing so. They consider him to be dead and won't even accept a glass of water from him.

At the age of 15 Resham was jilted by his girlfriend at school. Being unable to find peace through his Hindu faith he turned to drink and drugs. However his heart could not rest until one day he found himself outside Tansen church during one of the services. His heart was touched by the words of the songs but he felt afraid to enter the building. The next week he returned with the intention of listening outside again, but was persuaded to come in by the man leading the service. Again the words of the songs spoke powerfully to his heart, and during the singing of a song which speaks of "following Jesus" he decided he wanted to do just that.

Resham spent a year at Bible school in Kathmandu where he met his wife, Shanti. She now teaches at a school in Tansen to help the family income. Resham has a heart for sharing his faith

with those outside of Tansen. Of Palpa district's 200 or so believers, around 90 per cent live in the district centre, Tansen. That leaves the rest of the district with a population of more than 250,000 largely unevangelised. Resham believes God has given him a vision for taking the good news of Jesus Christ out into the villages of Palpa. He has already started doing so, sometimes in his own time and with his own resources, sometimes with other friends from church.

We feel privileged to know the Ranas. We have been shocked by the price they have had to pay to follow Jesus in terms of rejection by their families. We have been encouraged by their faithful service in the church despite minimal financial reward. And we have been challenged by their vision to share their faith with the many who have not yet even heard the name of

Story based on an interview with the Rana family on 17 October 1998 by Andrew and Michelle Furber, BMS workers in Tansen, Nepal.

Pastor Alcides San Miguel, São Paulo

Pastor Alcides and his wife used to be in charge of the Baptist orphanage in the Jardim Olinda district of São Paulo. His wife was very active in the area of



Christian social action in São Paulo, but sadly, she was killed in a bus crash a couple of years ago. Pastor Alcides with a family to support - moved on to a new ministry in San Miguel in the north part of São Paulo. It's not a



favela, but it is quite a poor area, although it does have structure, services, shops, hairdressers etc.

Pastor Alcides has built a church building at San Miguel; it's been up about two years now. It is also used for pre-school. But he's now moved on to the extension. It doesn't have a roof yet - he's waiting for a donation of materials. To add to the pharmacy, that is up and running and provides an income for him, he also wants to have a dentist and a First Aid Post here, so that it provides a real service for the community.

The Pastor is a dreamer, and he'd also like to have a house that is a refuge centre for people running away from home. Usually people leave home because they have been abused, but they have nowhere to go. So, in desperation they turn to the brothels or the drug barons who give them somewhere to stay - but at a price. Stuart Christine (BMS missionary involved in church planting work in São Paulo, Brazil) as told to Jan Kendall

Photographs:

Above: Children at San Miguel Baptist Church Left:: Stuart Christine and Pastor Alcides Below: San Miguel Baptist Church



bms news

Changes to BMS Co-ordinators

South Wales Goodbye to: Gareth Hutchinson **Gareth was appointed BMS Co-ordinator for** South Wales in 1987, having come from the



Baptist ministry to take up the position, and he has now retired.

At the last General Committee Gareth spoke of how he had started working for BMS at the age of seven - collecting money for missionaries. He said: "BMS is my beloved Society. I'm one of the 'old school', and it's been my duty and privilege to preach the gospel, because if people don't know the Saviour, they are not going to be interested in overseas work."



Welcome to: **Nick Bradshaw** Nick will join the Team as Co-ordinator for South and **Central Wales as** from 1 April 1999. Nick is a Welshman. who went to school

in Penarth. After working for the DHSS in Cardiff, he trained at South Wales Baptist College before taking a pastoral role at London Road Baptist Church, Lowestoft. He then moved to become pastor of **Christchurch Baptist Church, Welwyn** Garden City about two years ago.

Nick says: "I am delighted at this opportunity to strengthen and encourage the missionary interest of churches in Wales. It is a passion for world mission that I want to get into the heart of the churches in Wales. Wales is a nation that I am passionate for. God has blessed this nation in the past. I sense that in calling upon God to bless this nation again there has to be a heart that cries out to God to bless the nations. I want to show how BMS provides for that passion to get out and achieve the purpose for which God put it there in the first place."

Goodbye to David Martin

David was accepted by BMS as a candidate in 1965, and went to Brazil as a

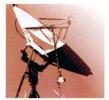


missionary in 1968. Five years later he returned to the UK and became a General Committee member. He then came to work for BMS on the home staff as Assistant

Secretary for Children and Young People, then Promotion Co-ordinator, later an Assistant Overseas Secretary and Regional Representative for Central America, and finally, since 1994, Director of Operations.

As the new structures

come into place following the Management Review, David will stand down and seek other avenues of service.



SAT-7 launches new satellite

In the autumn of 1998 Eutelsat successfully launched a new satellite (W2), which replaced the former satellite (Eutelsat 2F3) used by SAT-7, the TV broadcasting service for Christians of the Middle East. The new satellite transmits programmes from the same orbital slot (16°E) and time every Friday and Sunday, but at a new frequency: 11.178 GHz. This change will have affected most of SAT-7's audience who watch their programmes via Eutelsat, and in fact has affected all channels, including six Arabic ones, which broadcast from Eutelsat 2F3. The viewers will have had to retune their satellite receivers, and for many this will have meant calling in an engineer.

BMS is a member of the SAT-7 Partnership Council.

Check Out

March/April 1999

March

Arrivals

None

Departures

Betsy Guarna-Moore and Saverio Guarna to Tirana, Albania

Arrivals

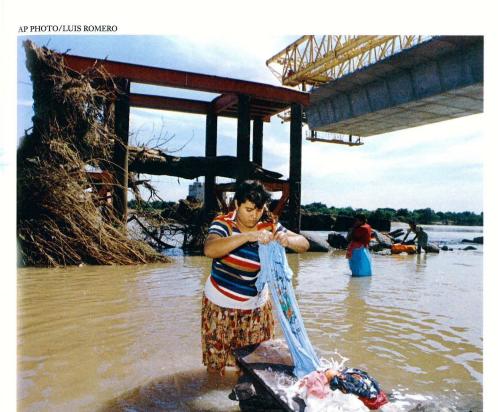
Sue Headlam from Chandraghona, Bangladesh Ann Bothamley from Vellore, India

Carole Whitmee from Balangir, India Alex and Irene Black from Chiang Rai, Thailand

Joyce and Stuart Filby from Ostende, Belgium Gerry and Johan Myhill, from Curitiba, Brazil

Departures

lain and Karen Gordon to Kathmandu, Nepal Kate and Simon Harry to Kathmandu, Nepal Judy Cook to Chiang Mai, Thailand Sheila Loader to Kathmandu, Nepal Grace Penney to Kathmandu, Nepal



Relief Fund grants Central America £16,014

BMS has sent £16,014 from its Relief Fund to help the international relief effort in the wake of Hurricane Mitch, the money to be divided between El Salvador and Nicaragua.

In Nicaragua it is estimated that over 2,000 people died in this disaster, with 970 missing. Nearly 900,000 people were displaced from their homes.

In neighbouring
Honduras the Central
Baptist Church in
Tegucigalpa, the capital, is
reported to have collapsed.
The church was a centre for
relief work and medical care

for the poor at their clinic. Many people around the church were made homeless and are now living at a university.

El Salvador also suffered. BMS missionary David Quinney Mee, who had returned to the UK last October for Home Assignment, has gone back out to El Salvador, and is assessing the best use of financial support, with the help of a Salvadorean team.

Ukraine/Hungary £5,000

Severe flooding also hit the Transcarpathian region of the Ukraine and eastern Hungary at the end of 1998. The BMS Relief Fund responded immediately, and £5,000 was sent to provide help for the flood victims.

Photograph above:
Reina Guadalupe Iraheta,
23, washes her clothes in
the flood waters from the
Rio Lempa. Hurricane
Mitch wreaked havoc
across Central America,
causing the death of over
6,000 people. In the
background is the remains
of the Gold Bridge.

oms news

Changes to BMS Co-ordinators



Central and East England Goodbye to: Jim Clarke Jim Clarke, Co-ordinator for Central and East England, took early retirement at the end of January on health grounds.

Jim was appointed as a BMS missionary to Brazil in 1962, and he arrived there in 1963. He came

back to the UK in 1970, and became BMS Coordinator for Central and East England in 1986.

Tribute was paid to Jim at his farewell at the last General Committee. Sheila Bull from Cambridge spoke of his "passion for world mission." Jim said his years as Co-ordinator had been "the best 13 years of my life."

Welcome to: John Smith

John steps into Jim's shoes as the new Coordinator for Central and East England. John grew up in SE London and was converted at the age



of 17. He worked as a local government Personnel Officer before training for pastoral ministry at London Bible College, and in 1988 moved to the Cotswold town of Minchinhampton. Here he pastored the local Baptist church during a period of lively growth and development. For the past four years, John has been the senior pastor at London Road Baptist Church, Lowestoft. He is also a member of the Leading Edge committee.

He says, "I am delighted to have the opportunity of encouraging churches to develop their support of world mission. **Developing Christian communities** committed to mission has been at the heart of my ministry for many years. For me, world mission begins with those we work and live with, and then extends to the many exciting programmes and projects in which BMS and others are involved all around the world. Together, I hope that Baptist **Christians in the Central and Eastern Area** will continue to make a significant impact in sharing the good news of Jesus and promoting care and justice for those most in need."

John can be contacted on 01502 567686.

world mission link

world



Photographs: below, recycling game

Flying High

People of all ages from St Mary's Baptist Church, Norwich recently took off on a plane journey with a difference; to discover more about BMS and its work.

BMS videos formed the in-flight entertainment, and catering was supplied courtesy of BMS recipes from

around the world. Colouring packs and games also helped pass the time for the children.

Most of the in-flight information and ideas came from the BMS Power Pack material.

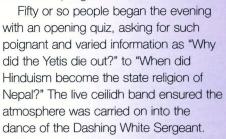


Himalayan Ceilidh

plane journey

Arranged by Cummertrees, Dumfries and Annan Baptist churches, with special input from former BMS missionary in Nepal, Isobel Strang, the event was billed as a Himalayan Ceilidh. The Nepali style refreshments available included Nepali tea (made with sweet, boiled milky tea and spices), but also tuna fish sandwiches. (Tinned tuna used to be the only tinned fish readily available in Nepal, and so was a somewhat over-used ingredient in many a dish.) The cola, however, was made with non-

mountain spring water!



The combination of music, slides and Nepali crafts and literature meant that everyone enjoyed the evening. £121 was raised for a health and development project financed by BMS in the Nepali district of Gorkha.



Return Visit

Haydn Davies, minister at
Maesyrhelem Baptist Church, has
made several trips to Albania over the
years, but it was on his last visit in
1996 that he had the idea of arranging

a return trip for Mirlinda and Pavlina, two Albanian girls he



had met in the course of his visits. He says, as their English was not much better than his Albanian, he suggested that they bring a translator with them; so Eva, who spoke English, came as well.

Whilst they were in Wales they spoke in several Baptist churches, (both Baptist Union of Wales and Baptist Union of Great Britain). Haydn says, "Those of us who shared with them that period of three weeks soon realised how poor they were in this world's things, but how rich they were in their desire to do God's will. They belong to a church that in the Communist period had gone down to three old men, who met secretly. But now the church is up to about 150."

ZAIRE/CONGO REUNION Sat 8 May 1999

An all day event, starting around 10.00am, at Egerton-Rothesay School, Durrants Lane, Berkhamsted for anyone interested in Zaire/Congo. For more details contact Ruth Montacute MBE, tel 01442 384610 or e-mail her at ruth@egerton2.u-net.com



Vinoth Ramachandra

Simon Jones introduces

Vinoth Ramachandra to *mh* readers

inoth Ramachandra is one of the most original and provocative mission thinkers active in today's world. A Sri Lankan nuclear scientist, he is currently South Asia Regional Secretary for the International Fellowship of Evangelical Students. He is the author of two chunky books of mission theology 'The Recovery of Mission' and 'Gods that Fail: Modern Idolatry and Christian Mission' (both published by Paternoster) and last year he gave the London Lectures on Christian mission in a multi-faith world.

There seems no one better placed to speak on such a sensitive and vital topic. Nurtured in a culture influenced by all the world's major religions, Ramachandra brings fresh insight and a searing clarity to his discussion of Jesus and his mission.

He reminds us that for the early Christians, 'The impetus to mission sprang from the very heart of the gospel itself. Missionary outreach...was not an activity tagged on to a faith that was basically about something else; rather it flowed from the very logic of the death and resurrection of Jesus. The truth that the early Christians believed had been disclosed in Jesus was for the world because it was about the world.' (The Recovery of Mission p 224)

And what was this truth? Simply that through the story of Jesus we are able 'to discern signs of God's new order, inaugurated in Jesus, in all human struggles against fear, greed, violence, sickness, oppression and injustice.' And 'it is this story, alone among all stories, which gives human beings the firm assurance, rooted in historical event, that their struggles are not ultimately futile...because death, sin and evil have been overcome.'

Ramachandra says that we engage in mission because Jesus was raised from the dead and is alive and active in the world today.

Mission, he says, is only possible because of the resurrection. It alone gives meaning to every act of love and service in a sinful world. The resurrection, he continues, is God's 'yes!' to the world. So if we believe in the resurrection, we should be a world-affirming people – as the first Christians were.

If this doesn't give us confidence to go into the world and make Jesus known through word and deed, then nothing will!

Simon Jones is BMS Co-ordinator for London and the South East of England.

Vinoth Ramachandra is South Asia Regional Secretary of IFES



These are just the clothes that my home church had in their missions cupboard".

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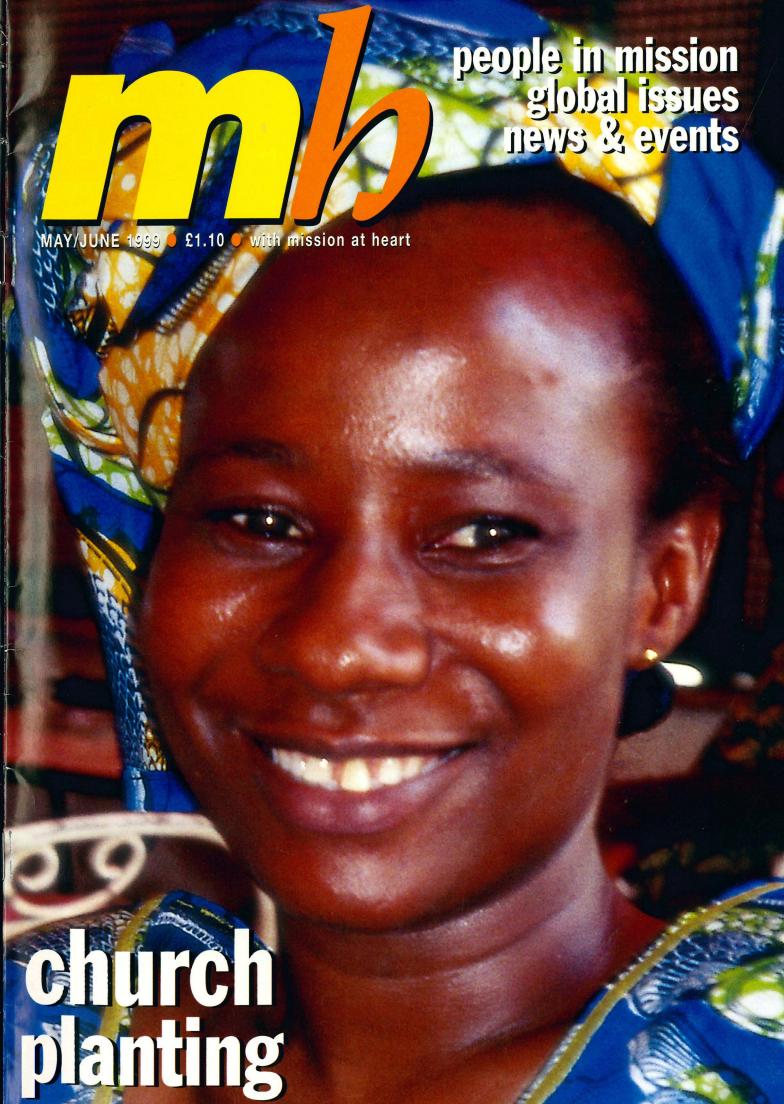
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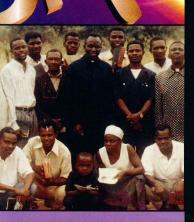
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Every day BMS hears of needs around the world that people like **YOU** could fill

- people with **your** desire to serve,
 - your skills, your experience
- people able to go short-term or long-term
- people who are financially independent
- people who need financial support
- people with a God-given desire to be involved in overseas mission

These are some of the specific opportunities we're currently looking to fill.

There are needs for:

Carpenter - North Africa

Doctors – all specialities in, amongst other places, Bangladesh, Nepal, North Africa

Engineers – electrical, mechanical, water and others Congo, Nepal, South Central Asia

Ministers for church planting, evangelism, pastoral oversight and theological education Albania, Bangladesh, Bulgaria, Croatia, France, Italy, Thailand

Nurses and Paramedical workers

– all specialities Bangladesh, Nepal, North Africa and many other places

Project Directors – with management experience North Africa and Nepal

Teachers – including TEFL teachers China, Nepal, North Africa

Station Manager – satellite TV station manager Cyprus

Besides these specific vacancies, there are many more. We have need of people

- to work in city slums
- to work amongst women in some of the most oppressed places on earth
- to help people read and write in their own language
- to help drug addicts rid themselves of their addiction

There is no shortage of needs in the world

- it's people like you who are in short supply
- people who want to make a difference
- people who want to make Jesus known



For more details and information contact Kathy Kavanagh BMS, PO Box 49, Didcot, Oxon, OX11 8XA.

Tel 01235 517700.

E-mail kkavanagh@bms.org.uk

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COVER PICTURE CHANTEL TEHE, STUDENT WORKER IN IVORY COAST PICTURE PAM BRYAN

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world news

hat do you think of when you hear the words 'church planting' or 'church growth'?
It's understandable if we equate what is happening worldwide with what we know in our own back yard — whether that's tremendous growth, stagnation, or total decline.

On the whole churches in Europe are experiencing the latter two. When we're rubbing shoulders on a regular basis with discouraged Christians it's easy to lose sight of the big picture — what we're about. Then we get dragged down in the quagmire of church maintenance rather than mission, looking to the parochial rather than worldwide, seeing things in tunnel vision rather than widescreen.

Someone once said, "Blessed is the person who expects nothing, for they shall not be disappointed."

I'm always tremendously excited when I read what has been called the Parable of the Sower, because, whatever else you might glean from it, the crop promised is a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown. I'm excited because in those days ten times was considered to be a good harvest!

Ephesians 3:20 says, "Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us..." Our prayers for building God's kingdom need to be focused and verbalised — exactly what is it we're asking, even pleading with God for? And before this happens, our prayers need thoughts, dreams and imagination realising how great God is, and how much he wants to move in our world today. This verse tells us that God can do greater things than our imagination would limit us to. That's mind-blowing!

This issue of mh is looking at areas of the world where God is working, bringing about situations of church growth, even a few years back thought impossible.

We're all involved in God's worldwide work: by our prayers, giving of time and money, by raising awareness in churches and cell groups, and some will leave their homes and get their hands dirty serving God in cross cultural mission work. Let's raise our imaginations a notch higher in what we're asking God for, trusting that we won't be disappointed.

You'll find a free collecting box on the cover of this issue. It's an incentive to give a little extra to the work of BMS: making Jesus known worldwide.

With best wishes.

Jan



World



D

they had little food. When released, the students were sent directly to the airport, and flown out on the next available flight.

Having seen this happen, three more students decided to leave JETS of their own accord. "These students that we lost are some of the most godly people on earth, outstanding Christian scholars, and dear friends," said Dr Shehadeh.

JETS was given full government recognition in March 1995. In three years it has reached an enrolment of 150 students from 14 countries. (EBPS).

Jordan Theological students expelled

Three students from Jordan Evangelical Theological Seminary (JETS) in Amman have been expelled from the country in a 'painful manner', according to JETS President, Imad Shehadeh.

The students, one each from Iraq, Egypt, and Sudan all had legal residence in the country, and were registered as legal students of JETS. They were put in prison for a week, along with real criminals. It was cold, and

Russia 'Land of ice' receives fire of gospel

Young Christians – most of whom have only been converted in the last four or five years – in the remote easternmost part of Russia have travelled across the isolated Kamchatka region to Petropavlovsk to take part in a Discipleship Training School to equip them for church and missionary service.

In this area, nine time zones east of Moscow, there have been nationwide fuel shortages. The number of

IEWS



Russian army in military training

fatal accidents and suicides are reported to have increased dramatically in recent weeks.

"It's absolutely unbelievable what they are enduring," said Al Akimoff, Training School Director. "They are having to survive on very little food, without power most of the time. Some of them have to walk several miles every day to get to class." One of the students from a distant community walked for 12 hours to reach a plane that could fly him to Petropavlovsk. Two others sailed across rough seas for two days.

Until a few years ago, there were few, if any, Christians in the frozen peninsula which was home to major Soviet military bases and closed to outsiders. Since the fall of Communism, missionaries have been able to visit the area - once called the impenetrable 'land of fire and ice' because of its subzero temperatures and range of active volcanoes. There



are now 13 churches here. (YWAM)

Cuba **Bibles burned**

Despite reports that Cuba is becoming more open to matters of faith and religion following the visit of Pope John II a year ago, it appears that the Government's policy towards the Bible has not changed.

On 3 February, Miami's Radio Mamba reported, "Thousands of Bibles from

Japan

news in brief

"A return to pre-war nationalistic morality, and the enforced use of the Japanese flag and national anthem, is not the answer for the problems we currently face in Japanese schools," said Junichiro Naito, General Secretary of the Japan Baptist Convention. While violence in schools, murder, bullying, truancy and suicide is on the rise, he believed that both parents and children need to be released from the extreme competition that exists in Japanese schools. (BWA)

Sierra Leone

The first Baptist church in Africa, the Regent Road Baptist Church in Freetown, Sierra Leone, founded 1794, has been burned by rebels of the Revolutionary United Front. The news came from Moses Khanu, General Secretary of the Baptist Convention of Sierra Leone, but he and his family are safe. The European Baptist Mission offices survived a bomb, and provided a refuge for neighbouring residents.(BWA)

Sri Lanka

An Assembly of God church was attacked by a mob on Sunday 14 February. A mob assaulted some people at the church, which is replacing its small prayer hall with a larger building. Police dispersed the mob, but the church people could not leave the church to go home as they feared attack on the way. The next day two masked motorcyclists told the workers on the church building site that they would be killed if they did not stop their work.

India

Australian Baptist missionary, Graham Staines, and his two sons Philip (10) and Timothy (8) were burned alive while sleeping in their van, in the early hours of 23 January. They were attending a mission camp in the state of Orissa. Staines had served the tribal people of India for 30 years. His wife, Gladys, said "I am terribly upset, but not angry. My husband loved Jesus Christ, who has taught us to forgive our enemies." Right wing Hindu supporters have been arrested. (BWA/Open Doors)

Uzbekistan

The Union of Churches of Evangelical Christians -Baptists (UCECB) of Uzbekistan received a registration certificate from the Uzbek government earlier this year. Ten congregations were registered as part of the process. Baptists around the world protested when, last year, a new religious law had been passed restricting the religious freedom of groups such as the UCECB. (EPBS)



the United States were burnt near a military unit in Managua, in the municipality of Arroyo Naranjo by (Cuban) authorities, arguing that they were 'subversive books'."

One eyewitness told a reporter that Bibles "were thrown from a truck, thousands of them, into the



dump, and then set on fire."

The Bibles came from the United States, and on their covers were written the words 'Cuba para Cristo' (Cuba for Christ).

A spokesperson said, "We observed the opening towards faith and religion as evidenced by the Pope's visit, and were very encouraged that the evangelical church will have similar opportunities during 1999. We assumed that the ministry of Open Doors, which pioneered Bible deliveries to Cuba since the early 1960s, would be allowed to return to Cuba, (but) the tragic news we receive is of this Bible burning." (Open Doors)

Freed ones reversing history

have travelled to Mali, the Ivory Coast and Senegal, where they visited the infamous Goree Island, the prison from which thousands were shipped into slavery.

These trips focus on



One of the main ports of entry for slave ships coming to the United States is now home to a new reconciliation movement intending to reverse history by sending black Americans to Africa to talk about freedom - in Christ.

The AFrica Redemptive Operation (AFRO), based in Richmond, Virginia, is hoping that African-American Christians will travel to their ancestors' homelands as missionaries.

The initiative is headed up by Joseph and Yvette Zintseme from Cameroon, West Africa, who commented, "In the past there have been very few African-American missionaries in Africa, in spite of the fact they can do a better job because of the way they would be welcomed."

By taking groups of black and white Christians from America on prayer and research trips to Africa, the Zintsemes hope to start building a bridge between the two continents. Teams

reconciliation between black and white, and between black Americans and Africans, "because we realise we cannot hope to mobilise African-Americans as missionaries for Africa and ignore the fact of slave history.

"African-Americans have had their identity taken away by African ancestors who played a part in slavery by selling their brothers and sisters, sons and daughters to the slave traders."

One participant who went to Senegal said, "My trip... opened my eyes to what missionaries endure while serving in foreign countries. I saw that we Americans have so many things we consider necessary, but in reality they have nothing to do with our existence... I take far fewer things for granted since my trip... and I have much more compassion for the lost and the hurting." (YWAM)

Chechnya The aftermath of war

A group of missionaries set out for Chechnya at the end of January to help provide help and hope to the people tortured by war. At least 15 different mission agencies have left this area, and still nothing has been heard of the pastor of Grozny Baptist Church, pastor Alexei, kidnapped in October 1998.

The majority of young people either fled or have died. It is the old who have stayed. Families were split in the war, and many are totally unaware as to whether other family members are alive or not. Boys, too young to be soldiers or terrorists, roam the streets, openly selling guns. They have no homes, no families; they are dirty and without hope. Elderly women - 'grannies' around the age of 80, are the mainstay of the church and the community. They, themselves, have lost everything: their homes, their wealth, their loved ones, and still they go on helping the needy.

The members of Grozny Baptist Church continue in their faith in spite of grenades erupting in the churchyard. Loss of their pastor has hit them hard; they know bandits usually identify themselves and ask for a ransom after a couple of weeks if they have a hostage. This has not happened. There has been no information about Pastor Alexei.

The group also visited a refugee camp at Vladikavkaz, and a hospital





where many people live, disabled from injuries in civil war. Again, it is the old women who are giving the help here. The Baptist church's project for the year is the support of the hospital and the home for the refugees.

The group embarked on their mission, believing their task was to give. Instead, they came away feeling it was they who were given to.

England Hope for gender benders

People struggling with sexual identity problems – that scare away most churches, because they don't know how to cope – have at last found help from a Christian who understands their problems.

The counselling and support ministry is for transvestites, transsexuals and those looking for help in how best to handle such pastoral situations. It is run by Keith Tiller, a man who, himself, once had a secret life as a cross-dresser and considered undergoing a

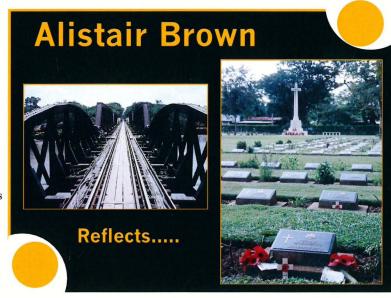
'sex change' operation.

"Many transsexuals and transvestites claim to be happy dressing and living as women, but a large number suffer depression, and often turn to drugs and alcohol," said Tiller from research and his own experience. He had a nervous breakdown after the collapse of his second marriage, and while in hospital was advised to consider 'sex change' surgery. He became a Christian before going through with it.

At the start of this ministry, Tiller met regularly with men who believed they were women trapped in male bodies, or who enjoyed dressing in female clothes, to offer advice and pray as they sought to change their lifestyles. "I know what it's like to feel that no-one can possibly understand you. I can come alongside and say, 'I know, I have been there'," he said. "I am here to listen, pray, cry, whatever is necessary as they try to move forward."

Tiller averages one new inquiry a day – from someone struggling with their sexual identity, their partner or a church leader looking for help. As well as men, he now has an increasing number of inquiries from women wanting to become men.

Tiller is now hoping to start an international Christian organisation teaching and counselling on transsexual and



The pictures of a bridge and a cemetery are linked. They're both in Thailand. It's a railway bridge. The graves, in Kanchanaburi, are of prisoners of war. The bridge spans the River Kwai.

The directive from the Japanese Imperial General Headquarters to build a 250-mile long railway from Thailand to Burma was issued in June 1942. Though it would have to be hacked out of thick jungle, the railway had to be finished in 14 months.

More than 61,000 POWs and a much larger number of coolies from Thailand, Burma and neighbouring countries were all set to work. The conditions were dreadful. In the work camps men sometimes lived for weeks on only the daily ration of rice with a little salt. Malaria, dysentery and the vitamin deficiency disease pellagra attacked the prisoners. Up to 80 per cent of a camp might be sick, but a certain quota had to work each day so men were sometimes carried out on stretchers to hard labour.

In the end the railway and several bridges over the River Kwai were built, bombed, repaired and bombed again. More than 16,000 POWs and 100,000 native labourers died building the railway.

Last *mh* I wrote about the Colosseum, how people can do terrible things to others. That wasn't just 2,000 years ago. It's 20th century too, as the Thailand-Burma railway horrors show. And as we head into the 21st century, it's Rwanda, Congo, Sierra Leone, Orissa, Kosovo and many more; some all too near to home. Humankind is not getting better. We are not redeeming ourselves. I see no evidence to contradict an ancient but bold statement about Jesus, Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved. •

Alistair Brown is General Director of BMS

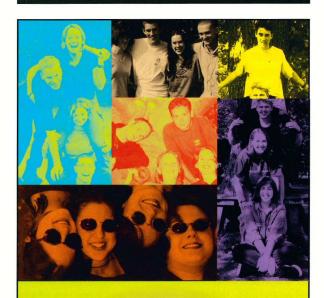


world news



transvestitism issues. His on-going study has led him to "become more convinced that we are looking at a relational deficit in their lives that is manifesting itself in this sort of behaviour." (YWAM)

The Action Gap



Thursday 24 June 1999 7.30-9.00pm Abingdon Baptist Church, Ock Street Admission Free

The BMS 28:19 Action Teams present The Action Gap They took a year out, put their faith into action, and want to tell you their story.

Their lives have been challenged and changed. Yours can be too. A lively presentation that will keep you on the edge of your seat and will challenge your young people to rethink their attitude towards mission.

For more details, or to reserve tickets, contact Gill Crippen on 01295 721460

NB The Action Teams will not be attending June General Committee this year.



Vision 2020

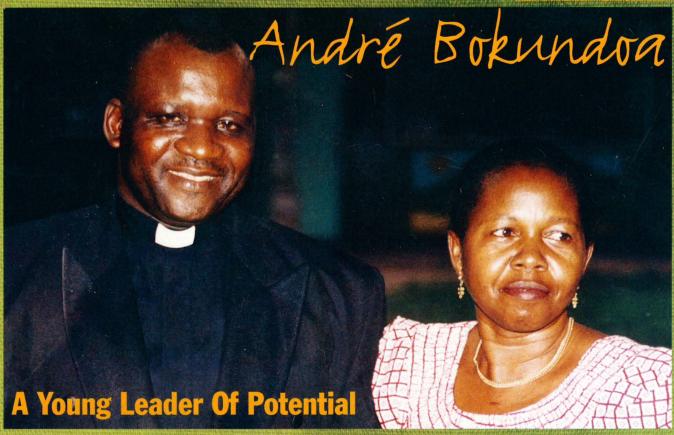
There are 36 million people in the world today who are needlessly blind, people whose blindness could have either been prevented or cured. Nine out of ten of these people live in the Third World. Vision 2020, is a campaign inspired and initiated by the Christian Blind Mission International and supported by many other agencies, including the World Health Organisation, aiming to eradicate avoidable blindness in the next 20 years by:

- increasing awareness of blindness as a major public health issue
- · controlling the four major causes of blindness by: doubling the number of cataract operations performed (a simple and inexpensive operation can restore sight); improving access to clean water in the worst affected areas (repeated infection from poor hygiene and polluted water have led to six million people being irreversibly blinded and another 146 million suffering from Trachoma); eradicating River Blindness (18 million people in Central Africa are blinded by a worm which is passed by the bite of a fly in fertile river areas) and supporting vitamin A distribution programmes (vitamin A deficiency blinds 350,000 and kills two million children in Africa and Asia every year)
- training enough eye care workers to treat even the remotest and poorest communities of the world
- · creating infrastructures in all countries to ensure eye care is available to all.

These aims are achievable, with the necessary finance, and Vision 2020 will be appealing to governments to raise their spending on development programmes, and asking large corporations and the public for extra donations. It is hoped the campaign will prevent 100 million people from going blind.

Please send this month's card, asking that the British Government financially support the Vision 2020 campaign, to: The Rt Hon Clare Short, Department for International Affairs, House of Commons, London, SW1.

BMS, Baptist Union, Christians Aware, Church of Scotland, Methodist Church, United Reformed Church.



CONTINUES HIS SERIES ON PRESENT AND FUTURE CHURCH LEADERSHIP IN THE **DEMOCRATIC** REPUBLIC OF CONGO (FORMERLY ZAIRE)

ow did I get into this?" André Bokundoa entered the office looking bemused. "I was invited to lead opening prayers for the Executive Committee, and they went on to choose me as chairman for the meetings!"

Things would only get worse. Or better, depending on your point of view. Chosen later to chair the General Assembly which had to appoint a new General Secretary, the mantle again fell on him. Morale was low, the finances in a mess. The CBFC needed pulling up by its bootlaces and setting on a new path.

"Before I formed you in the womb I knew you," God said to Jeremiah,

"before you were born I set you apart." André was born in 1954 at Mongana, son of a village chief and his wife. He attended the primary school at Bosondjo and secondary school at Upoto. He grew up in a Christian environment, but a book given by the Head gripped him. He committed his life to God, and was baptised in 1972. With his State diploma he began teaching in 1975, and married a year later.

He considered studying medicine,

"He considered studying medicine, but that book continued to speak..."

but that book continued to speak, and he opted for Theology. Descending the river to Kinshasa in 1980, he entered the Protestant Faculty of Theology, with the support of a BMS grant. So well did André shine that, on graduating, the Faculty retained him to teach in the Old Testament department.

When the Faculty suggested doctoral studies and, again, the BMS helped, he obtained a Diploma at the French Biblical and Archaeological School in Jerusalem. He went on from there to gain a doctorate at Sheffield University. His wife, Christine, and their children joined him, and they took part in the life of Cemetery Road Baptist Church in Sheffield.

On returning in 1996 he picked up his teaching again at the Protestant University of Zaire, and was promoted to Departmental Head in 1998. He also began to pastor a CBFC Frenchspeaking church.

Life for André Bokundoa was already busy and fulfilling before he walked into trouble in 1998. It was bad enough to jump from local church pastor to General Secretary, but to do so when things had hit rock bottom was enough to daunt the boldest spirit.

There is no question that André is a young leader of potential. His priority is reconciliation, enabling the Community, in peace and unity, to get on with the task of making Jesus known to the world. For that, he says, he needs God's help and the prayers of God's people.

Owen Clark is a church worker with BMS in DRC

global church growth

STANLEY DAVIES

LOOKS AT THE HOW AND WHERE OF CHURCH GROWTH AROUND THE WORLD OVER THE LAST 40 YEARS

ne of the great untold stories of Christianity in this century has been the astonishing growth of vital indigenous Christianity in many countries of the world." ¹

This growth has been predominantly among Evangelicals and Pentecostals in Latin America, Africa and Asia. At the same time there has been a massive decline of Christianity in Europe and in the Pacific. This decline has been the loss of nominal Christians in the West to secularism and in the Pacific islands to sects. When we compare the rate of growth of world population (1.7 per cent per annum) with the growth rate of different world religions, it is true that taking Christianity as a whole, its rate of growth is slower than that of Islam (2.6 per cent per annum). However, when we examine the

statistics in more detail, we see that Roman Catholics are growing more slowly than the world's population while Protestant Christians are growing at about twice the rate of the world's population. The significant fact however is that Evangelicals are growing at over three times the population growth rate of the world.

Patrick Johnstone in his latest excellent book entitled, *The Church is Bigger than you Think*, has recorded where the greatest growth has taken place and in what decade:

"In the 1960s the growth in Africa was the most marked. The massive increase followed the ending of colonial rule when most African countries became independent states. Christianity became indigenised in a remarkable way – some groups being more syncretic, others more



evangelical and charismatic in flavour. Never before in history has a whole continent seen such a radical change with Christianity gaining over 50 per cent of the population in a single century. The spiritual turning to God has sadly not impacted the politics of the continent. Numerous dictators, gross corruption, terrible wars and ghastly genocide have all occurred in countries with many active Christians. Yet in many of the countries of Africa with the worst conditions, the Christian Church is one of the only stable structures that remain.

The 1970s were marked by the rise to prominence of Evangelicals in Latin America. Over this century the



global church growth



number of Evangelicals has multiplied from under 250,000 in 1900, to around 40 million in 1990 and possibly over 60 million by the end of the century. There are now more Evangelicals in church on an average Sunday than in Roman Catholic churches – and this in a purportedly 'Catholic' continent. There are still more Evangelicals in Brazil than in the whole of Europe. Evangelicals have become a force that cannot be ignored.

In the 1980s it was East Asia's turn. The growth of the Church among South Koreans, the 50 million Overseas Chinese and the Javanese in Indonesia was followed by the extraordinary growth of the Church in the post-Mao era in China. The result of this has been that Evangelicals in Asia have become more numerous than in North America. The Singaporean Church has now become the most missionary-minded Church in the world in terms of number of missionaries sent out for every 1,000 Christians. Of the ten largest evangelical congregations in the world, seven of these are in one Korean city, Seoul - a city where only 110 years ago there was not one single congregation. There still remain vast areas and many large peoples of Asia where there has been no breakthrough yet, so this positive picture is still only partial.

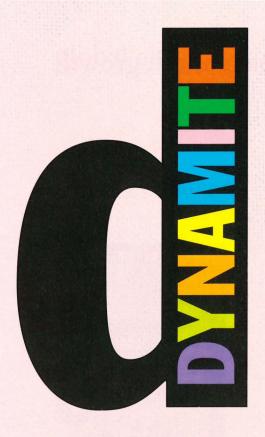
In the 1990s, the spotlight moved to Eurasia. The spectacular disappearance of the Iron Curtain led to extraordinary changes, with the resurrection of the older indigenous Churches (mainly Orthodox) and also massive growth in evangelical activity, both indigenous and foreign. Sadly much of the latter was stronger on zeal and weaker on cultural sensitivity and co-operation. The reaction of Orthodox Churches has been to limit or even outlaw foreign and evangelical activities." ²

The challenge wherever numerical church growth has taken place is to ensure that there is growth in depth as well as in width. Gotfried Osei-Mensah, a prominent Christian leader from Ghana has said, "The Church in Africa is miles wide but only inches deep.".There is a desperate need for appropriate Bible teaching and a radical look at the methods of leadership training. The wholesale export of western models of training are totally inadequate to meet the needs of growing churches around the world. Discovering new and dynamic training programmes for each region of the world that prepare pastors and teachers "to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up... and become mature..." (Eph 4:12-13) is a mammoth but urgent task. 1 The Church is Bigger than you Think, Patrick Johnstone, Christian Focus 2 ibid



Stanley Davies is General Secretary of The Evangelical Missionary Alliance





THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE CHURCH IN NEPAL

christians in Nepal. Today
believers are estimated to be
around 200,000, and churches
have been planted nationwide.
This is a remarkable expansion of the
gospel in a Hindu kingdom. Such a
rapid expansion of the Church over
such a large geographic area in so short
a time could not have taken place
without the perseverance of many
Nepali Christians.

1 Prior to 1950

Before the 1600s it is doubtful if the name of Christ had ever been heard in Nepal. In the 1700s 80 Catholic converts were recorded. However in 1769 under the Shah dynasty the small Christian community was forced to leave Nepal and a policy of exclusion towards all foreigners and Christians came into force. This attitude hardened and the "closed door" of Nepal was not to be opened for nearly 200 years. The door was locked, the key lost and the hinge rusted.

William Carey was the first to translate and print a Nepali translation of the New Testament in 1821 but few copies reached Nepal. In the 1800s the British developed Darjeeling, India for tea, attracting thousands of labourers from Nepal. Through Christian missionaries working in the Darjeeling area the Nepali church first began.

Ganga Prasad Pradhan

An early convert in Darjeeling was Ganga Prasad Pradhan, a worker on the tea plantations. In 40 years he helped to translate the Bible into Nepali, and to print it; he also became the first Nepali ordained pastor in Darjeeling. Ganga Prasad Pradhan had a vision to go back to Nepal, and as an old man he and his family (a group of about 40 people) attempted to go back to Kathmandu to establish a Christian presence, but were refused settlement.

In 1933 the first meeting of the Nepal Border Fellowship was held along the southern border with India. At Raxaul (India) – the most important entry point from India to Nepal – a small hospital was opened to minister to Nepali needs.

Some Nepalis made forays into Nepal even though it was illegal. One such evangelist, John, was determined to enter Nepal; he did so, but there was no record of his return. Others were "praying and waiting for the Lord to open the way".



2 The 1950s and 1960s

The winter of 1950/51 saw a revolution in Nepal. The King of Nepal regained power from the Rana family that had isolated the country for 200 years, and the way was open for Nepali Christians to live there. During the 1950s the three main centres of early church development were Kathmandu, Pokhara and Nepalganj. All three churches were under the leadership of Nepalis (and some Indians) and were encouraged to do so, because the government was still suspicious of foreign missionaries.

Western missionaries were working side by side with the Nepalis but accepted a specific Government restriction against proselytising and were content to play a supportive role. In these decades Nepali Christians experienced relative freedom. The churches joined together in a nondenominational Nepal Christian Fellowship in 1961. However there were relatively few baptisms. The first major imprisonment for being baptised and for baptising was in 1960 in Tansen (nine people), and for the next 30 years all converts had to face both the threat of imprisonment and the pain of ostracism from their Hindu family, the latter of which was often far worse. Persecution resulted in a strong though small Church which grew very slowly.

Tir Bahadur

Baptised in 1938 Tir Bahadur began to "work for the Lord" at Indian mission stations along the border. In 1954 he was finally allowed to settle near Kathmandu where the United Mission to Nepal (UMN) began its work. He was pastor to the small group that ran a dispensary there. The work was hard with few tangible results at first. Growth did not take place until the 1970s when the UMN turned their hospital over to the government so releasing Tir Bahadur to work full time as a pastor and evangelist. In the next ten years over 100 baptisms were recorded.

3 To date

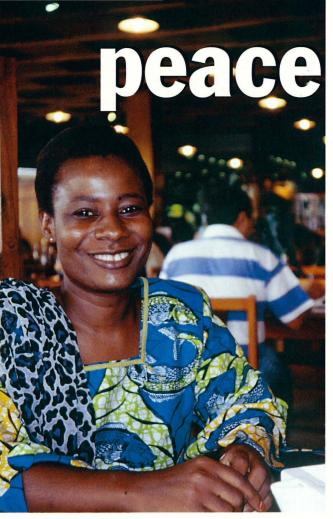
Recently the church has grown more and more independent of mission influence, especially in the cities. In the 1970s and 1980s persecution persisted but the Church





democracy in 1990 restrictions in many areas were reduced. Persecution has nearly disappeared and evangelism is now widespread with hundreds of baptisms each week and a huge increase in the number of churches. In Butwal there were until

and encouraged by the mission organisations of the West. The dedication and faith of the Nepali Christians has been a beacon to the Hindu kingdom of Nepal. The resulting rapid growth of the church has therefore been of little surprise. Writer's name withheld for security reasons



+ vision = a thriving church

bidjan in the Ivory Coast was different to the Africa I had encountered before. It is a modern city, with good roads and high rise buildings in the commercial centre.

But it's still very much Africa, with the hustle and bustle in the suburbs, and in some pockets is almost village-like. Even in the city centre, outside a very sophisticated bank, I saw a mother washing "They had her baby in a bucket.

Because this is West Africa, it is also the least evangelised part of the continent. The Ivory Coast was a French colony, and all very exciting" the French influence is still very much in evidence. Of the 15 million or so people, 50 per cent are animist, 30 per cent are Muslim, and 20 per cent Christian. Abidjan has mosques in every suburb, and the largest mosque in West Africa is being built right in the centre.

I visited a four-month-old church plant in a suburb of Abidjan called Riviera Attoban. It was the second plant from the mother church - a Southern Baptist Church, and it started with ten people including the dynamic minister's wife. The minister, pastor Luc Monnaie, is a man of vision with a heart for mission. The first church plant in another suburb is now autonomous.

The walls of the church plant are half built, and they have got a roof. They are hoping to complete the building before the rainy season. Riviera Attoban is on the edge of the city, and the church is surrounded on two sides by building sites for new housing estates, and on the other two sides by fields. In

no time at all the church will be in the centre of a large number of houses.

I visited a church meeting and was delighted that the core group were very keen to reach the people in the neighbourhood, and were discussing the way forward.

Had they heard of Willow Creek? They were so concerned that the preaching was understandable by the new people who came to the church, and were very keen that the words of the hymns were available to everyone - not usually a priority in African churches, where people either don't read, or know

the hymns by heart.

They had started cell groups. The children were pouring in too - they now had between 50 and 70 kids in their Sunday School. It

started cell groups ... It was

was all very exciting.

I compared what I had seen in Abidjan, with where I had worked in the Congo. I realised it is so much easier to have vision and to build a church when you have enough to eat, when you are relatively secure, when your country is not constantly in conflict, where your communications systems work, and most of all where keeping body

doesn't take up vour entire life. Pam Bryan is **BMS Regional Secretary for**

Africa

and soul together



IN THE LAST ISSUE OF mh PAM BRYAN TOLD OF HER SEARCH FOR A BASE IN AFRICA. HERE SHE TELLS OF CHURCH LIFE AND GROWTH IN ABIDJAN, THE COMMERCIAL CAPITAL OF THE **IVORY COAST**

Above: Chantel Tehé, full time-worker with

Below right: the new Church plant

Christian students



Six days of hard pedalling

Opposite: one of the evangelism bicycles Below: on the steps of Bolobo Church, Ngamakala. Pastor Mompanda front right



EVEN IN THIS DAY AND AGE OF HI-TEC COMMUNICATIONS, MANY PEOPLE GROUPS ARE STILL VERY ISOLATED.

ELIZABETH
ALLFORD RECEIVED
AN ACCOUNT OF A
JOURNEY WITH
MISSION AS ITS
PURPOSE INTO THE
HEART OF AFRICA

t was with great anticipation that we prepared for our latest evangelism trip. The team consisted of four of us, with myself, Revd Pastor Mompanda Mansimba, the Regional Evangelist, leading the group. We bought batteries for our loud speaker and a few medicines plus a cassava bread each for the journey. We encouraged our church members to pray hard that God would protect us and our bicycles and that he would give us strength to complete our month long trip.

It was decided to leave very early in the morning to avoid some of the heat of the day. After a short time of prayer we left Bolobo at 4.30 am. It took six days of hard pedalling to reach Selenge, covering a distance of 385 km. On the way we slept in small villages where there were no pastors, only a lay preacher/catechist.

That same evening, the 26 July, we crossed over the Mai Ndombe Lake by dug out canoe to Inongo. We then continued paddling, not pedalling, to reach Nkonde, a village 35km away on the far northern end of the Lake. There we were able to leave the canoe on the bank and had to walk for three kilometres in mud! It was too hard to ride our bikes at that point!

We finally arrived at our destination, a village called Iyombo where there are many pygmies. This was our third trip to the region with the aim of telling this long forgotten and abandoned people of the love of Jesus. As yet this village has no school nor church and has had very few visits from pastors or evangelists. Other tribes in the area either look down upon this race or are frightened of these forest people.

There was a large open space with some shade, an ideal site for our open air evangelism campaign. We set up a table, put some flowers on it and began singing. Once we had a large crowd I was able to tell them we had brought them some Good News. I was able to explain the gospel to them and thanks be to God, many were converted during the campaign.

We were able to hold three

discipleship seminars, the first on repentance, the second on faith and the third on rebirth in Jesus. In total 83 pygmies were baptised, two were nominated as deacons, one as a catechist. Before returning to Bolobo I was able to leave them a Bible. Praise God for his journeying mercies towards us and for his saving grace for the people of Iyombo.

Elizabeth Allford is joint Secretary for Misssion Affairs in Kinshasa, along with her husband Steve



from Bra Brae

VINCE MACDOUGALL

GAVE UP THE SUNSHINE OF BRAZIL FOR A CHURCH PLANT IN THE MOST NORTHERLY BAPTIST CHURCH IN THE BRITISH ISLES. HE TOLD HIS STORY TO

BILL PETERSON.



ppointed as BMS missionaries in 1985, Vince and his wife Sadie had gone to work in Brazil. For six years he and his family had lived and worked in the Amazon Basin. They were responsible for 20 congregations and 1,000 church members. During the next six years they moved south to Joinville, one of the largest industrial

cities in the world. Here Vince was responsible for five churches. Vince was born in Oban and he has now returned to Scotland because of the educational needs of his sons. His passion for church planting, however, is unabated. But why Brae?

The overall population of Shetland is about 23,000 with Brae having

"... church planting is rather like **Ting** the waves."

approximately 3,300 people. It is a large village, quite elongated, with housing spread along the main road. It has a police station, firestation, swimming pool, eight pubs, three churches, a high school and a minisupermarket.

Brae has grown over the last 20 years as a result of the oil industry coming to Shetland. Europe's largest oil refinery has been built just five miles away, at Sullom Voe.

The population is about 40 per cent rural Shetlanders and 60 per cent residents from outside Shetland, brought to Brae as a result of the oil boom. People make a living in the oil industry, salmon farming, fishing,

crofting, and service industries. Some commute to Lerwick. Forty per cent of its population are children, and 20 per cent are elderly. Between five and ten per cent are regular church attenders. Shetland **Baptist** Association

showed an interest in developing church life in the area and, as a result, in September 1982 a local printer and his wife opened their home as a base for a congregation and fellowship group.

The Brae Fellowship, as it is known, was involved in outreach to youth and children's clubs. They were visited by an evangelistic team from America in the mid 1980s.

Vince and Sadie have been in Brae for five months. Now the congregation comprises of eight members including Nelson Smith (the printer), his wife Mary, and daughter Dawn and ten adherents. They have left the Smith's home, and now meet in a rented hall. How does Vince do it? He described church planting rather like surfing the



Photographs: Page 16, Vince MacDougall preaching in the community hall; founder members of the new church; Page 17, Induction, September 1998, Congregation at the induction 1998.



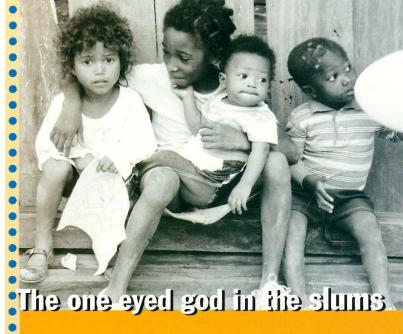
waves. The surfer waits for the right wave and then puts all his or her effort into riding it. In much the same way the church planter treads water until he can see the way the Spirit leads. Therafter, all effort is put into riding the wave. That is a good analogy because water sports are popular in this part of the world. During the summer months when the sun never quite sets and the day's work is over, sailing boats are seen all over the Voe as the Brae residents and visitors enjoy the pleasures of the sea.

And Vince's main wish: to be a fisher of men. ■

Bill Peterson is joint Missionary Secretary of

Lerwick Baptist Church.





STEVE FLASHMAN

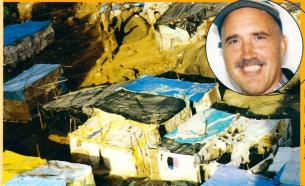
ou'll find this god in some of the poorest urban slums in the world. It sits there in the corner demanding attention from all who enter. It's a status symbol that lifts its adherents above the level of their neighbours, and even the monochrome sort leave the onlookers in no doubt who is the boss! It's man-made, like all 'gods' are, but soon has worshippers flocking to peer at the vast array of material things enthusiastically devoured by rich Westerners – only TV images of course, but highly dangerous. They deliver two dimensional goods utterly out of reach of the viewers and tragically preach a mindset that shouts, "material possessions will make you happy!"

How dare we invade peoples lives in this way! The fact that TV sets are given out at next to nothing prices, encouraged by multinational companies, only speaks about manipulation and exploitation of the poor in one of the most cruel and damaging ways possible. There is something exceedingly grotesque about TV images beamed into homes where the children beg on the streets for survival, or mum has contracted AIDS because the only way she can feed her family is through immoral earnings, or the death of a child with diarrhoea is a 'normal' part of everyday life.

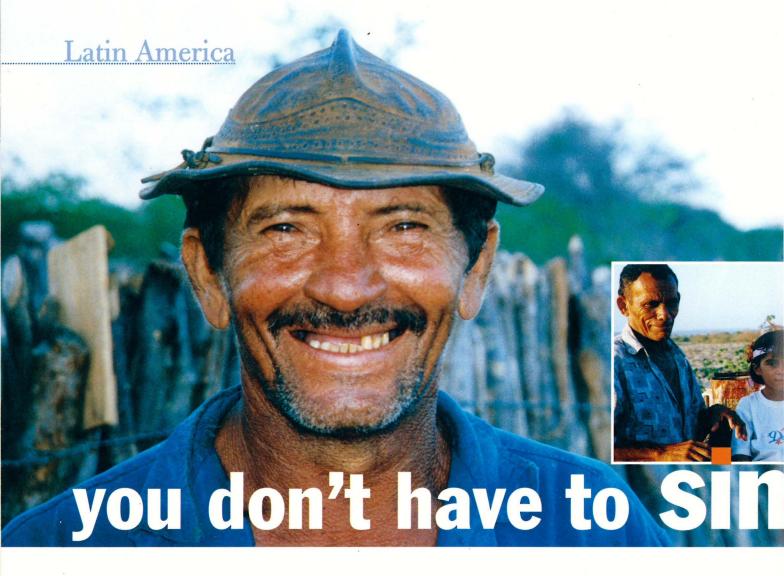
If you have ever sat with people who are struggling to feed their six children in a home the size of an average garden shed, you will have found that your personal values and Western mindset have been challenged beyond belief! For there you will often find a sense of 'family' and 'community' that is rarely discovered in our 'rich' culture or even in our churches. And the wonderful thing is that you will have probably sensed the presence of God in that struggling family in a way that is rarely experienced in the cosy comforts of the West.

Some say that the 'one-eyed god' is a window on the world. Many would dispute that because the information we receive is so often 'screened' to present information biased to the presenter. Our prayer is that the church, which is the Body of Christ, should be a window on the truth about God – his character and his rescue plan for a hurting world. Who needs a 'one-eyed god' when the God of the universe is in control of the big picture! •

Steve Flashman is a Baptist minister and International Director of Soapbox Expeditions



Photographs: Top; Equador street children. Left: Slums in India with TV aerials



MIKE AND DAVEEN WILSON GIVE AN UPDATE ON THEIR FLEDGLING CHURCH IN TRAPIÁ

ales of laughter rocked the congregation as the drama unfolded on the TV screen. Those of us who'd seen the video before rushed back to check that a comedy had not somehow got into the wrong box, but no – it was the right tape and the laughter continued right through all 47 baptisms – their own – until we switched off at the end with everyone happily reminiscing.

One smiling face belonged to our 57-year-old neighbour – Josué. He'd been famous for having lots of sworn enemies and for brutally beating his wife and daughters. Gradually, over the years, God had shown him that he was being looked after and helped him give up drink. Then we were able to convince him that you didn't need to be able to

sing or read in order to be a Christian and, with great relief, he gave God the ownership of his life.

Some time later Josué was visiting a friend's farm when he realised that a man out in the yard was one of his sworn enemies who had moved away.

"Josué has also discovered, ... that he actually has a beautiful deep

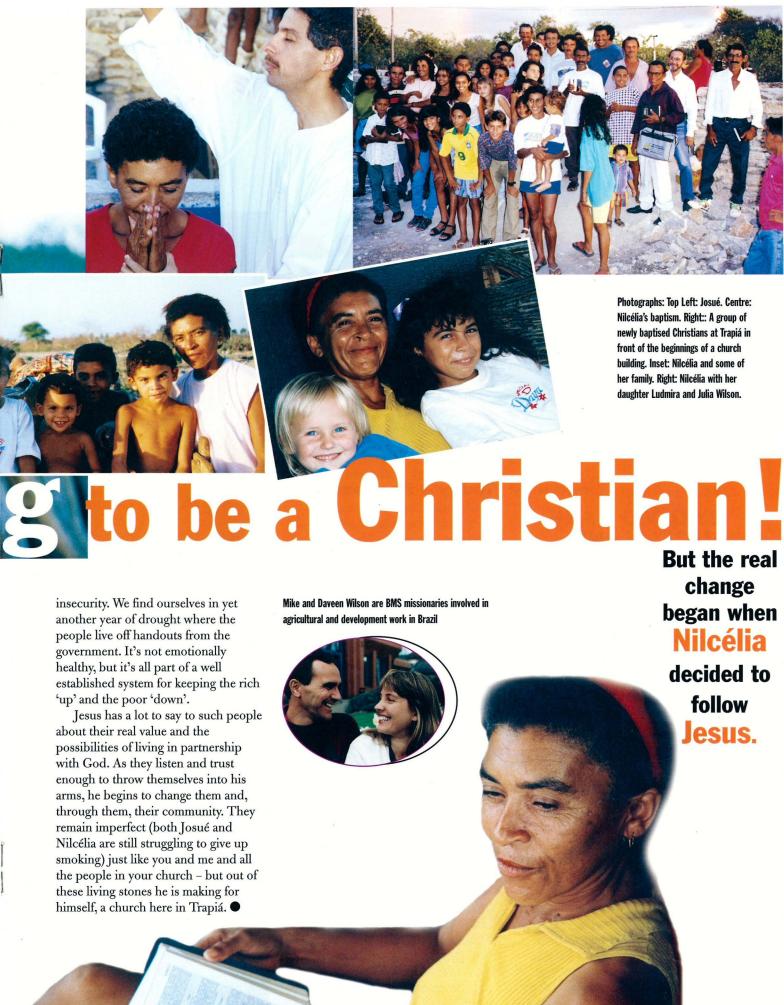
singing voice."

The man looked frightened as a serious-faced Josué strode across the yard to meet him, but then Josué said, "Good afternoon, I've become a Christian!" "So have I!" replied the former enemy, and the two men gave each other a big hug. Josué has also discovered, to all our delight, that he actually has a beautiful deep singing voice.

Some of the loudest laughter was coming from Nilcélia, a 38-year-old skinny mother of seven. Rejected all her life in favour of a prettier, lighterskinned sister, she was a bitter, sarcastic woman when we first got to know her. Critical of everyone, but most of all, herself, she neglected her children, her home and herself. She began to blossom after she started working in our home, earning regular money for the first time in her life.

But the real change began when she decided to follow Jesus. He has softened her with his love and helped her remain silent when her family insult her. She has begun to take a pride in herself and her home, and to care better for her children. She's proudly learning to read the Bible and has a gift of standing up for right – in spite of criticism.

Trapiá, where we live amongst such neighbours as Josué and Nilcélia, is a scattered rural community in the harsh semi-arid north-east of Brazil. The country people have been despised and ill-treated for generations, and tend to be illiterate, poor, embarrassed in front of outsiders – but highly skilled in coping with hunger, bereavement and



Barletta

A SERIES EDITED BY
JAN KENDALL THAT
LOOKS AT TOWNS
AND CITIES AROUND
THE WORLD WHERE
BMS PERSONNEL
ARE WORKING

BY DAVID & ANN MACFARLANE

Introduction

Barletta is situated on the Adriatic coast in southern Italy in the region of Pulgia or Apulia, as it is better known. It is very warm from April to October; temperatures rise well into the 40°s. November and December become cold - much like a cold, bright, day in our spring. It can also rain here, but the really cold, rainy, weather arrives around February and March.

History

Barletta is famous for the historical event called La Disfida which means The Challenge. Italian school children study it with great enthusiasm from their books, in which they read the names of the 13 Italian cavaliers who, in 1503, routed the same number of Frenchmen, who had challenged the valour of the Barlettanos.

The most curious and important historical item in the town is the bronze statue called Il Colosso, 4.50m high. It was cast in the fourth century AD and is believed to be of Emperor Valentino I. The statue was actually found in the sea and no one knows how it came to

be there. The Duomo di Barletta, built on a Romanesque structure, is a cathedral with Gothic features. Its facade is high and decorated with heavily worked windows including a rose window, and its main door was hung during the Renaissance.

Today - Recession

Barletta has 15 km of sandy beach which, unfortunately, lies mainly undeveloped and neglected. Many people, especially the Barlettanos, would love to see the town developed as it would bring much needed work to the area. In the 1970s Barletta was an enterprising town with a thriving industry in shoe making, but due to recession and foreign imports there is a lot of unemployment. Sadly now a generation of people are missing, and the next generation are all set to follow. The problem is that people leave and emigrate in their search for work. Add to this the problem of lack of government funds and initiative, and of course, corruption, which sadly forms a great part of the system here, there does not seem to be much hope.

Unemployment and Crime

Barletta has around 90,000 population with 20 per cent unemployed. Unlike Britai, there is no system of welfare system to help. If people are young and out of work, there is no financial help from anywhere and the burden then falls on the family to support them.

Unfortunately this then leads to lots of petty crime, black market activities, and drugs. Here in Barletta, as in most parts of southern Italy, there is the



our town: Barletta, Italy



presence of the Mafia.

The Mafia deal mainly in money-laundering, extortion, prostitution, drugs, and, of course, the black market. They are subtle but present. Every region or area has their own, with the most famous and the big daddy of them all being the Sicilian Mafia. In fact, they have a union which unites them all together and forms a formidable crime syndicate. If you have a business, such as coffee bar, shop, or factory, you most probably would be asked to pay 'la tangente' which means protection money.

Schools and health care

In Barletta it is common to leave school when you are 14, and most young girls and children in poorer families do this. Very often girls are not encouraged to seek a career or even a job. There are women in our church who are only in their 30s who left school at nine years old. Families would send their sons to school, but could not really see the

responsible for providing everything they will need at school: books, pencils, paper — everything.

Classrooms are bleak, with no maps or pictures on the walls; no computers or practical teaching aids either.

In Barletta the hospital is very poorly equipped. Nursing care is at a minimum and often relatives of the patients have to stay with them to assist them. Visitors come and go as they please, and wards can become very overcrowded. Unfortunately money that is earmarked for the hospital and other projects here in the south usually falls into the wrong hands.

Religion

The people are warm and friendly, hospitable and kind. They are also very superstitious. The Baptist Church in Barletta still finds difficulty in being accepted in the community. For example, our daughter Elizabeth attends a school with 1,000 pupils, and Elizabeth is the only Protestant pupil in



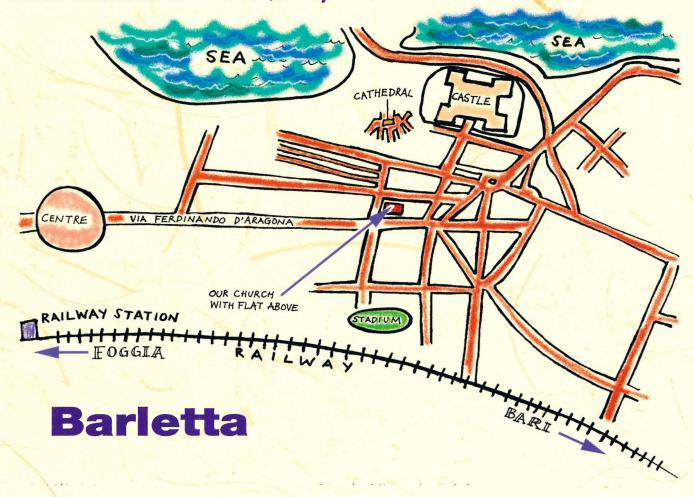
High School children demonstrating

sense of sending a daughter.
Fortunately the trend is now changing.
Schools here in the south of Italy are
nothing like British schools. They are in
need of lots of organisation! At the start
of every term there are always strikes
— not only by the teachers but by the
pupils as well! They take over the
school and have big demonstrations in
the street.

When children go to middle school at the age of 11, they, then, are

school — the other 999 are Catholic or of Catholic background. Hardly a week passes by without some kind of religious festival. There is usually a procession with statues, bells and incense. The people throw rose petals out onto the street so that the Madonna or Saint has a bed of flowers to walk on. The women spread their best tablecloth or bedspread over the railings of the balcony. And of course there is the usual bancareli which sell all

our town: Barletta, Italy



sorts of things — usually a special type of sweet for the occasion. Here the people — not the Baptists — celebrate their name day in the same way we celebrate our birthday (usually because they are called after a Saint).

Food Some typical dishes of Barletta:

Orecchiette pasta (small ear shaped pasta) which is handmade at home,

and served with a very thick (horse) meat and tomato sauce. Also fish soup, shell fish, baby squid, mussels, cuttlefish, sea urchin and red mullet. Salt meats, smoked sausage, raw sausage. Fruit and vegetables in abundance. Vegetables include fennel, turnips, cappucio lettuce, white onions, radishes, peppers, tomatoes. Fruit also grows in abundance eg Turkish grapes, Regina grapes, apricots, pears, melons, and peaches. Barletta and

surrounding area is mainly grape and olive growing and our olive oil is the best.

Casseruola di polpetti (octopus)

The reason why the baby octopuses caught in the waters off Barletta and the

Bari coast taste so good according to the experts, is because the Adriatic is so deep there. The deeper the sea, the more saturated with salt the baby octopuses are, and those that live in such a salty situation take on a better flavour. Before they are eaten they must be pounded against the ground or rocks; the fishermen then wait a few minutes, then make them curl up by shaking them in a wicker basket and then dip them into the sea water. Pounded and curled, they can be eaten raw, fried, baked, or boiled without water, and used in salad. Casseruola di polpetti has special Ragu sauce made of oil, onion, dry white wine, pepper, tomatoes, and parsley. It is used as a dip for bread or as a topping for pasta.



our town: Barletta, Italy

Top far right: Colosso di Barletta - Eraclio Top left: Street in Barletta Below left: The little port, Barletta



Leisure

The Italians love to dress up at the weekend, and they then walk up and down the street at night, young and old alike. Grandparents, mums and dads, teenagers, young children and babies all do this, although in Barletta this is reserved for a Sunday and special occasions.

Traffic and shops

The streets are very congested with traffic: lots of cars and loads of motorinos (scooters), winding in and out of the traffic, everywhere you turn. Your first impressions would be that the traffic does what it likes, and you would not be far wrong! The streets tend to be narrow and parking is almost impossible. The roads in the town are

not very well maintained with lots of holes. The shops open in the morning around 7.30pm and there is also lots of little street markets or people selling fruit and vegetables from the doorways of their homes. The people shout to you as you pass by, encouraging you to buy from them. The town in the morning is very busy, and all of a sudden as 1.00pm arrives the street clears and every one seems to vanish. Shops open again around 5.00pm in the afternoon and the streets become a hive of business till around 9.00pm when they close down. The young people of the town then come out and the stand out in the street till around midnight. Black market cigarettes are sold openly in the street along with copy CDs, music discs, and video and computer games.



David and Ann MacFarlane, BMS personnel in Barletta, Italy

Volunteers

CAROLYN COLE ASKS THE QUESTION:

WHERE WILL YOU BE?



hen I was at primary school I was asked to draw a picture of the way I thought people would be living in the year 2000. In my design, people flew everywhere in little vehicles, they wore wild and colourful clothes and had eccentric and futuristic hairstyles. But as we approach the year 2000, Levi jeans are still fashionable, hair styles have changed little and we still drive with our feet to the ground! In some ways, little has changed, and yet the Millennium is a focal point in many people's minds at the moment.

Imagine it's the year 2010 and your children/grandchildren/nieces/ nephews want to know, "What were you doing

when the new Millennium dawned?" I'm sure we all have a scrap book, photos or some other piece of memorabilia to help us remember important events, such as the last day at school (I have a dress which everyone signed), a wedding, the birth of a first niece/nephew, an anniversary or a special holiday. What will your Millennium memorabilia show?

As I drew my picture as a young child, the one thing I didn't anticipate was that in the year 2000 I would be where I am now - enthusing and mobilising people into overseas mission through my role as the BMS Volunteers Co-ordinator.

Each person you see represented by the faces on this page, already knows how they'll be seeing in the Millennium. Two

thousand years ago, Jesus Christ came into a fallen world, into the midst of its suffering, pain, bitterness and unforgiveness, to save a lost people. As the Millennium dawns, BMS volunteers of all ages will be out in the world, responding to the voice which called them out of darkness, by taking the good news of Jesus Christ into all the world. They will be serving and giving of themselves in order to see the knowledge of the love of God spread throughout the nations.

I can't think of anything more exciting than being on the mission field and serving God when the clock strikes midnight on 31 December 1999. I plan to be there. What about you?



BMS has volunteer opportunities for adults of all ages to serve overseas for between four weeks and two years. To find out more, please contact Carolyn Cole, Volunteers Co-ordinator. Telephone 01235 517700 Email ccole@bms.org.uk



raser Nicholson was a 23-yearold shop assistant in Hamilton, Scotland, when he felt God calling him to leave his job and do something new. That 'something new' turned out to be joining Craig, Mel and Becky to form a 28:19 Action Team to Brazil. After five months working in Fortaleza, Brazil, Fraser writes of some of his experiences.

"As I look back at my time in Brazil, there are several things which really strike me. The first is something I first detected before we even departed Britain, while we were on training. The Lord wanted to humble me. I was too sure of my own abilities, I can see that now clearer than ever. I knew I was far from perfect, and

had much to learn, but I
thought I was able to
complete this scheme in
my own strength. How
foolish!

The big obstacle
I came across on arrival in
Brazil, was that I struggled
with the language – big time. I
was hopeless at French at

school, but that hadn't mattered, I mean, I wasn't living in France! This was different.

Another thing which can do nothing but humble you, is the nature of the work which we do out here. Sitting on the ground in a city square in the middle of Fortaleza with dirty, ragged street kids jumping on your back, is not your average pastime, as the looks on the faces of many

"....it is a **jOy** to bring these kids practical **love**."

passers-by tell us. What they do not understand is that it is a joy to bring these kids practical love. We take them water and so on, but it is the fact that we love them and come back to see them week after week that they remember.

One week in January, we visited 'Minha Casa' a Christian-run home for exstreet boys. It was tremendous, and one particular incident showed me that I had really changed. All of the kids there were what we would call clingy, and always

wanted to be shown attention and love – things they had been deprived of. We had been playing with them all and then it was time to go into the dining room for devotions. Two of the kids grabbed my hands and dragged me over to sit with them on the bench. As I sat there, with their tiny palms in mine, I knew I was a different person to the one that left Glasgow in October. God is good.

The final thing which I will mention is the gospel, the one thing that never changes. It has been such a tremendous privilege to be out here, and to be able to share the glorious gospel with many people. We have spoken to many hundreds in person, and thousands more when we went on the radio. Thousands of seeds sown, with people hearing the good news simply at open airs, services and schools amongst others.

We as a team are eagerly awaiting the rest of our time here, as well as the tour we undertake in the UK in May and June, when we will get the chance to do some of the same things in our homeland."

Fraser Nicholson, Brazil Action Team 1998/99

How do you plant a church?



Go where the Lord sends - not just to a country, but to people's homes.

Live as the Lord intends – with the people, as Christ to them.

Speak what the Lord says - tell them what Jesus has done and is doing.

Do what the Lord commands - obey him, not the expectations of people.

Give what the Lord gives - as a model for others to follow. **Ryder Rogers**



By waiting on God for wisdom and guidance

Be open to God's will/direction personally and in planning. Vision is important. Keep on looking for

something bigger. Set goals and have regular assessments.

Seize all opportunities for witnessing, praying and expounding the Bible. Identify (1) Areas of opportunity, (2) Church planters to send there, and (3) Networks of relationships to build on.

The Christians already there must:

Be committed to Jesus and the project realising it's a six days a week commitment.

Live in the area where the church is to be planted.

Be a praying fellowship, believing God wants them to form a church. Maintain the spiritual and not let practical things dominate.

Find homes/families for enquirer/Bible groups.

How the new church needs to grow

Sunday services must be welcoming to non-churchgoers with challenging Bible studies and messages; there should be mid-week meetings too with an evangelism programme.

There should be flexibility in structures - a willingness to change and listen to others.

Look for leadership gifts based on function/service, not position, with the agreement of the group - set these people aside preferably working alongside them for a time.

Discern and develop giftings in people. If necessary throw people in at the deep end even if they feel they can't do it well by making them responsible for different aspects of church life eg visiting/phoning.

Enable rather than do. New converts have zeal, contacts and spirituality. Form gifting groups for evangelism /worship / pastoring / teaching/ finance etc

Encourage all to have their own Bibles and show them how to have their own **Quiet Time.**

Have a follow-up programme for new Christians.

The church needs to carry on evangelism

The new church needs to grow so there must be an emphasis on mission and evangelism from Day One.

Eating together encourages people to come to events/meetings.

Be involved in mission, both locally and further afield.

Make sure your evangelism is based on bridge-building and friendship. Sometimes do something unusual eg street barbeque / Sunday service on a

The relationship with the 'mother' church

hired boat or on the beach.

The church plant must have the commitment of a 'mother' church behind it.

Links should be strong to begin with, gradually loosening.

Contributed by: Kevin and Linda Donaghy, Stuart and Joyce Filby, John and Valerie Furmage, Saverio Guarna, Wayne Hadley, and Ryder Rogers.

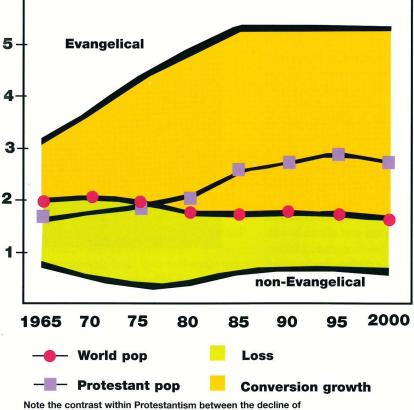
Nothing is achieved without prayer and it cannot be just a few earnest prayers in the group; everyone must be committed. I would love to introduce you to Pastor José Soares in Curitiba, Brazil. This pastor has taken the church in Vila Centenário from 45 members to 450+ and he puts it all down to prayer. They have a week of prayer every month when there is a prayer meeting every night from 8.00pm to midnight and they pray for four hours. They don't break for coffee or chit chat. It is serious business and the business is prayer, much of it kneeling. **Kevin and Linda Donaghy**

DIARY OF PLANTING A CHURCH IN CONGO

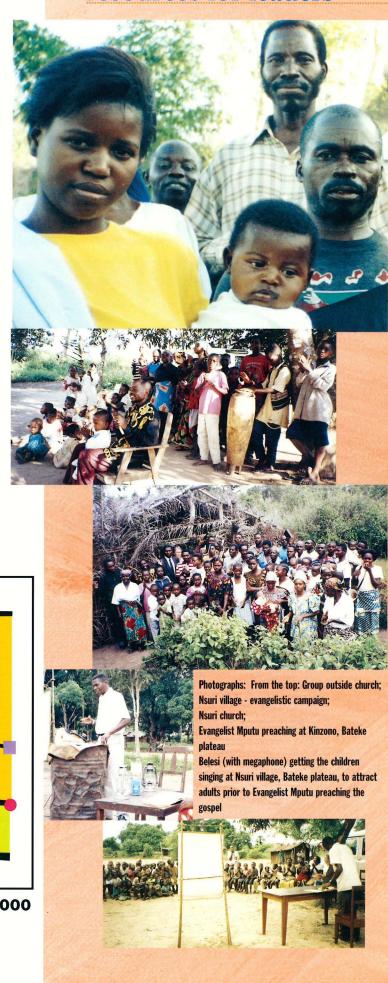
Usually by invitation, contact Christians or interested people in a village with a view to organising an evangelistic campaign • Visit the village and meet the chief • If he is favourable, agree with him a date to return to conduct a three or four day evangelistic campaign. He and any Christians in the village to publicise the event. • Return on the agreed date with the District Evangelist and one or two young volunteers. • Late afternoon, when people have mainly returned from the fields or the forest, the young people circulate through the village calling people to the meeting through a loud hailer. • Using a drum for rhythm, one of the young people starts to get those gathered to sing. • In the meantime the Evangelist sets up a rough, wooden framework on which to hang his large pictures. • The Evangelist speaks, giving an appeal at the end. • Those who want to make a commitment to Christ come forward for prayer - one of us prays for them. • They are given a tract - usually in Lingala - and encouraged to come back the next day. • This is repeated for the duration of the campaign. • On the last day people are encouraged to attend a service the next Sunday, to be followed by a meeting of those who wish to form a fellowship in the village. At this meeting we take their names and suggest they chose a leader. Also that they begin to put up a 'temporary' building of sticks and palm fronds for worship on the plot designated by the chief. • We leave them a Lingala Bible, one or two hymn books, and suggested Order of Service for worship, encourage them to meet regularly and agree to return to the village in about a month● Owen and Deanna Clark

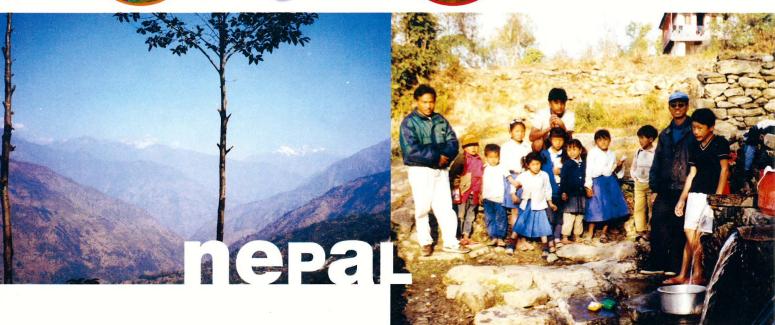
Protestant Conversion Rates since 1965

% Annual Growth



resources for leaders





Project 9059

To provide drinking water and sanitation in a remote district of Nepal. Cost £22,000

The Taplejung District in eastern Nepal is one of the most neglected in the country, because of its far distance from Kathmandu. To travel from the capital city, will take you two days and a night, on at least three different buses and a lorry.

BMS missionary Tlana Hnamler has conducted a feasibility study for clean water and sanitation to be brought to Phungling Village Development Committee, ward numbers 4, 5 and 7.

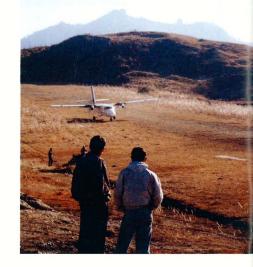
The communities in these areas face lots of problems getting clean water, and they

are willing to contribute manual labour so they can have a clean and safe system.

The sanitation practice here is very unhygienic, and children are especially vulnerable to disease as contaminated water flows openly - water that is also used for cultivating vegetables and for animal consumption.

When the project is up and running and it is hoped it will be by the year 2000 it will provide clean water for a 15-bedded hospital, two schools, a church and nearly 200 households. Thirty-eight households, at present without any sort of latrine, will be encouraged to have one, and all 200 households will benefit from health education.

If you would like to know more about how you or your church could support a BMS project, please contact BMS Projects Administrator Ruth Berry on 01235 517700.



PRAYER FOCUS ©



Margaret Gibbs: Durres, Albania

For many in Albania, a feeling of hopelessness is all pervading. Belief in a brighter future which came when the country first began to open its borders to the outside world was cruelly crushed when the majority of the people lost all they had through bad investments in pyramid saving schemes. The ensuing uprising of a people hurt and angry that their government had not protected them destroyed much of what was left, with shooting, looting and the destruction of property. Of the three million strong population, around one million have left the country convinced that a better life can only be found far from the country of their birth.

Margaret Gibbs lives in this country now, teaching the children of missionaries in the port town of Durres and sharing her Christian faith with those she meets. She says: "Sometimes the task of trying to help, to establish something constructive for people who have been given so few chances to understand that life can be better, seems overwhelming. Following a hard winter, when electricity and consequently heat, light and water were rarely available and as the country fills up with refugees from Kosovo, it is easy to fall into uncertainty and despondency. Tempers can get short! Signs of hope are all around however. The churches are busy providing clothing and education for Kosovan

refugees. The children's club run by missionaries and Albanians all around Durres are fuller every week – the children love them and are learning to trust each other and their leaders."

Please pray

Continue to pray for a brighter future for Albania and its people. The churches are only a few years old and their leaders are young but they are vibrant and growing. Pray for these leaders, for wisdom beyond their years, for a deep grounding in their faith which they can pass on to others, and for the hope that these younger people still carry in their hearts to be spread throughout their country.



Jenny Smith: Budapest, Hungary

Jenny is a BMS volunteer who has been

teaching English to students at the Baptist Theological Academy in Budapest since August 1998. These students are lay workers from Baptist churches across Eastern Europe and learning English gives them access to theological texts which are often not translated into their own mother tongues. One of the long-term aims of the Academy is to establish the first centre in Eastern Europe where Baptist students can study for a Masters degree and a PhD in Theology. With students coming from different countries, the courses will need to be taught in a common language - most likely to be English. This would mean that Jenny and other teachers like her would be assisting in the training, not only of future church workers and leaders, but also of future Theology teachers for the whole region. "What a privilege!" Jenny says. But her task is not easy. She is the only full-time English teacher at the Academy and recently lost one of her part-time assistants who could not continue the commitment on top of her full-time job. The head of languages, Laci Bacsi (Uncle Laszlo), is teaching the assistant's eight lessons until someone else can be found. He already has about three jobs, and can ill-afford the time for this extra work.

Please pray

For another volunteer English teacher to share the load with Jenny and 'Uncle Laszlo' (maybe even someone reading this article)

Jenny says, "There is much darkness in Hungarian society and experience, and we would be the Lord's light here." Pray the Lord would honour this desire and help Jenny and her colleagues and students.

Tor language learning. Jenny has worked in Hungary before but she continues to take evening classes in the Hungarian language

Chris and Sarah Mattock: Carlentini, Italy

After five years in Italy, Chris and Sarah Mattock feel that God is guiding them back to Britain earlier than they had originally planned. Chris headed to Italy as a pastor at a time when the Italian Baptist Union had around 40 pastors for 140 churches, and no students training for ministry. That situation has now begun to change, and the numbers of Italian ministers are growing.



The couple are also concerned about the education of their children, Simon (five) and Judith (almost three) and feel that there will be more openings for Sarah, an Occupational Therapist, to use her skills in the

prayer focus & people worldwide

UK than in Italy. The couple however, remain certain of their calling to serve Christ through involvement in world mission, but not exclusively to overseas mission. Chris is on the list of ministers seeking settlement in Britain and Sarah intends to continue her career in Occupational Therapy, on a part-time basis, back in the UK. Chris is also exploring other possible options.

Please pray

This has not been an easy decision to make; pray that the children will settle quickly into the UK, especially Simon who will be starting school.

Pray for God's guidance in this next stage of the family's lives.

Sue Headlam: Chandraghona, Bangladesh



Sue is a nurse, involved in a community health programme at Chandraghona, a Christian Hospital originally carved out of the forest. As well as physical

healing, the health programme includes an income generating weaving project which helps women to earn their own money by training and providing them with looms to use, and then selling their products. Sue is currently the only member of BMS personnel in Bangladesh, and is likely to be alone for some time as there is currently no one else 'in the pipeline'.

Please pray

For the right people to hear God's call to work in Bangladesh.

 For God's continued blessing on the weaving project and for the development of outlets for the sale of goods.

For Sue's safety and for excellent friendships with national colleagues and other expatriates.



Simon and Karen Collins: Luanda, **Angola**

GP Simon and teacher Karen finally found a permanent home in mid February, after

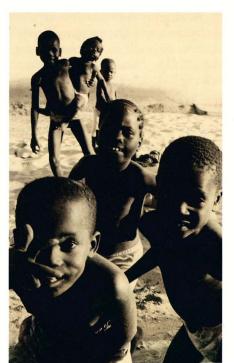
arriving in Luanda, Angola, in late November 1998. Suitable accommodation is very scarce but they are now living in a house which was formerly occupied by Assemblies of God missionaries. It is located ten minutes away from their place of work and has mango and banana trees in the garden! More good news was soon to follow when they received a letter saying they had been granted a residence visa after almost two years of waiting.

Please pray

Praise God for the issue of a visa which will allow the couple to get on with their work.

🕦 Pray for safety, especially now the United Nations have pulled out of Angola. For the building of good friendships

and that the couple would settle into the very different way of life which is Africa.



expanding Prayer Focus. In this series BMS personnel introduce friends and acquaintances whom they meet from day to day



Jacky and Gina Bredene, Belgium

Before Gina and Jacky became Christians they were very involved in all their local clubs - music, darts, dance and more! Their son Marco's best friend's parents were Christians, and over time they shared with Marco about Jesus and the Bible.

To Marco this was completely new and he, in turn, shared what he had learnt with his parents.

Gina visited a local Protestant church on Christmas Day, and during this service gave her life to the Lord. Her husband, Jacky, reacted strongly against this and told her to stay away from church. She did, but Jacky saw that something had changed Gina's life. Jacky was enslaved to gambling, and, as a result the family went deeper into debt. Some time later - more out of desperation than curiosity - Jacky went to the Sunday service and felt immediately welcomed. He and Gina then became regular attenders.

One evening Jacky was reading Doreen Irvine's book, 'Set free to follow Christ'

people worldwide

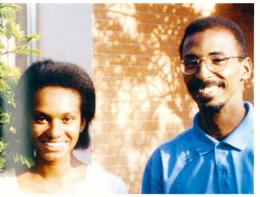
and at 3.00am knelt down by his bed and asked Jesus into his life. The next day he burnt all his gambling formulas and books, and knew that his slavery to gambling had been broken. Jesus had set him free.

Gina and Jacky have grown and changed. Now they are experiencing the pain of seeing their son Marco fight a battle against a drug habit. They believe he too will find release and freedom in Christ as they have done.

Stuart and Joyce Filby (BMS church workers in Belgium)

Everaldo Santa Catarina, Brazil

Everaldo Prateat da Silva was born into a very poor family, one of seven children. His father was a car painter, and it wasn't till he was older that his mother went out to work. He remembers being poor and



hungry, selling jars, and aluminium plates so that they had something to eat that day.

Everaldo's parents split up when he was 12, and he went to live with his eldest sister. A year later he moved back to live with his mother, and soon after his parents got back together again. Around this time his youngest brother and his mother became Christians.

Everaldo became a Christian at the age of 17. He says he tried four times to get into University to study medicine, but then he got a place studying psychology.

Since he became a Christian Everaldo says he has developed a great thirst for God's Word. "I would ask the pastor: 'If God's Word is so good, why are there so many people with problems?' I had a

great anxiety for the Word and to minister God's Word."

Today, Everaldo is married to Adriana whom he got to know at University. He is studying Theology and believes God has called him to the ministry of the Word. John and Maria Dyer (BMS missionaries involved in the coordination of theological education in Brazil)

Christophe and Dalila Goussot Morsang-sur-Orge, France

Dalila and Christophe have been Christians for five years and have been going to John and Sue Wilson's church in Morsang-sur-Orge for almost two years. Christophe has Christian parents, but Dalila does not have a Christian background - in fact her father is a Muslim.

They were married in September 1998 and live on the 12th floor of a block of flats in the southern suburbs of Paris, next to the motorway. It's easy to find their flat: it has a big 'Welcome' sign on the door, inviting any who wish to do so, to come in and chat.

They both work outside the home: Dalila as a teacher's assistant in a primary school, and Christophe as a security

They say, "We became members at Morsang-sur-Orge Baptist Church last year and we rejoice in the love of Christ poured into the hearts of our brothers and sisters."

Dalila often prays: "Lord, please grow your church." Since their arrival, there have been definite answers to her prayer.

The last person to be baptised at Morsang church specifically gave testimony to the way they had encouraged him in his

John Wilson (BMS church worker in France)





bms news

Baptist House News



Welcome: John Chalkley John joins us as **Senior Accounts** Clerk in the **Department of** Finance and Administration. He has come from the **United Bible Society**

in Reading where he was the Financial Services Co-ordinator. Prior to that he was the Financial Secretary of the Methodist Missionary Society. He enjoys walking, reading, gardening and jiving in his spare time.

Patrick Guiry Patrick has joined **BMS** as a Receipting **Clerk in the Finance** and Administration Department. He was previously a Civil Servant with the **Department of**



Employment, and more recently worked for four years as a civilian with the Thames Valley Police.

Stephen Harris

Stephen started worked at BMS at the



beginning of March in the IT section. He describes himself as being the person "people scream at when their systems go down!" Up until recently he was a full-time student at a Bible College in

Gloucester, during which time he had opportunity to visit Uganda for two months and work with a child sponsorship programme. He then studied Social Development (Third World Studies) at Swansea, and comes to BMS having spent six months as a helpdesk consultant with the Prudential.



Congratulations Tim!



Tim Trimble, who currently serves with BMS as an Account Controller with UMN in Nepal has been appointed **UMN Finance** Director as from 1 May 1999. UMN has around 250 missionaries from

various countries and 1,000 Nepali staff. It works in around 40 projects throughout Nepal with a combined budget of £5 million, which Tim says, "goes an awful long way in Nepal." He added, "It will be a challenge to ensure that all UMN's activities are funded and properly accounted for. However I am excited to be able to continue working with a team I have worked with for the last three years."

Paul Drinkwater

Paul, who teaches Electronics at Kathmandu University had a severe heart attack in Nepal. After several days in intensive care, he was allowed out of hospital, and subsequently flown back to the UK. He has been given the 'all-clear' from the John Radcliffe

Hospital in Oxford, and will now be convalescing in Gloucester. Paul and his wife, Hilary, have been with BMS in Nepal for three years, living in the outskirts of Kathmandu. Hilary is a nurse by profession, and has been working with local women setting up an incomegenerating craftwork project.

Jubilee 2000

In Uganda £11.50 per person is spent on debt repayments... but only £2 per person is spent on health care. Live Aid raised \$200 million to help the poorest in our world... yet Africa pays that back in debt repayments every week.



The cost of the Millennium Dome is around £750 million... a sufficient sum to pay Britain's share of cancelling all the debts of the 18 poorest countries.

The Jubilee 2000 campaign is now being supported and promoted in over 120 countries throughout the world. People like Desmond Tutu and Muhammed Ali, the Dalai Lama and Bono have added their voices to individuals, organisations and countries around the world who want to see real change.

BMS is one of the Jubilee 2000 Coalition members, committed to fighting for a new start for the poor. We believe this is a Gospel issue and deserves our practical

support and involvement.
Each of us has a part to play
in this vital campaign,
particularly as the G8
Summit in Cologne in June
draws near. Possible actions
you can take include:

- wearing the chain
- sending a card to Tony Blair urging the G8 countries to give a lead in cancelling debt
- participating in events in the UK on the weekend before the G8 Summit
- joining the human chain in Cologne on 19 June. For further information about the Jubilee 2000 campaign, contact their office direct (0171 401 9999) or ring Graham Sparkes at Baptist House (01235 517700).

Bangladesh health

Of the 13,430 children who attended the eye screening programme run by the Community Health Programme, (CHP), Chandraghona, Bangladesh, over 1,500 were treated for eye problems, two-thirds of the children having conjunctivitis. This was one of the highlights reviewed in the CHP annual report. BMS missionary and nurse Sue Headlam co-ordinates this project. The report also gave

account of other innovative

work that had taken place over the last year: a renewed family planning programme; a health awareness project amongst slum dwellers; and dental work by BMS Volunteer Simon Shillaker.

A recent paper produced by a United Nations agency has claimed that Bangladesh is probably the only country in the world whose population has been growing shorter because of the effects of malnutrition.

Photograph Left: Christian Aid campaigners outside the German Embassy in London, handing in a one and a quarter mile long red white and black paper chain made by 15,000 people at the Greenbelt Festival, as a symbol of the debt entrapping the world's poorest countries. Germany is in the campaigners' sights in view of its opposition to debt relief.

BMS Co-ordinators are here to help you!

Please check you have up-to-date contact numbers.

Phone Nick Bradshaw South & Central Wales 0973 842705 Derek Clark Scotland 0141 775 1201 **Phil Hindle** South & West 01823 698977 London & South East 0171 639 8717 **Simon Jones** Midlands Theo Lambourne 0116 271 3633 **Cath Mawson** 01274 487341 North **Central & Eastern** 01502 567686 **John Smith Delyth Wyn Davies North & West Wales** 01766 512957

E-mail nbradshaw@bms.org.uk dclark@bms.org.uk phindle@bms.org.uk sjones@bms.org.uk tlambourne@bms.org.uk cmawson@bms.org.uk jsmith@bms.org.uk ddavies@bms.org.uk

bms news

Farewell to: Chris Hutt

Chris Hutt, BMS Director of Finance and Administration, left BMS at the end of April to take up the post of Bursar at Regent's



Park College, Oxford. Chris studied for the ministry at Regent's and has retained a strong affection for the college. The work of Bursar will allow Chris to continue to use many of his accounting skills.

After 23 years on staff, the BMS home team will feel strange without Chris, and there is much that will be lost now we no longer have Chris and his encyclopaedic knowledge to hand. General Director

Alistair Brown said of him, "There is no indexing system compared to Chris' brain."

At his farewell tribute at BMS General Committee in March Chris said, "I have come to see that now is the time to leave BMS and a job that I have loved. I hope that in these last 23 years I have at least paid some small part in building God's kingdom through BMS." Photograph Left: Community Health Programme, Bangladesh

Check Out May/June 1999

May

Arrivals

Ryder and Heather Rogers from Tirana, Albania Kevin and Linda Donaghy from Palmela, Portugal

Departures

Helen Johnston to Amp Pipal, Nepal

June

Arrivals

Andrew and Michelle Furber from Tansen, Nepal Tim Lehane and Alison MacLean from Butwal, Nepal David and Sue Jackson from Colombo, Sri Lanka Sheila Samuels from Delhi, India Stuart and Georgie Christine from São Paulo, Brazil Keith and Barbara Hodges from Carnaxide, Portugal Philip and Rosemary Halliday from Paris, France

Departures

None

world mission link

world

Getting in on the Action

Priory Street (York), and Gorsley Baptist churches opened their doors to host pre-selection weekends for the 1999/2000 Action Teams earlier this year. Thirty three young people, strangers at the beginning, but firm friends by the end of the weekends, met to learn more about BMS, and what being an Action Teamer is all about, prior to interview.

Everything about the weekends was used to help the young people experience life overseas, from eating an Indian meal with their hands, to being put into teams and given just 30 minutes to come up with a church service to present to the rest of the group. There were also live telephone links with the current teams in Trinidad and Brazil. It wasn't all hard work, though; there was a party on the Saturday night and impromptu worship times went on most of the night!

Another first for Clive!

Just 50 minutes short of their 24 hour target, minister and BMS General Committee member Clive Doubleday along with companions Andy Gore and Paul Grinyer arrived at Lands End, having started out at John O'Groats at one minute past midnight that same day. The three raced through Scotland, Wales and England, stopping to preach in Edinburgh, Penarth and Torquay en route. Having travelled the 971 miles they raised £2,290 for BMS work in Nepal.



Photographs: Top, Charlotte Chapel, Edinburgh; Right, Clive Doubleday with John **James at Penarth** Tabernacle; Above, with Andrew Green at Upton Vale **Baptist Church, Torquay**





Leicester **Celebrates**

Over 160 people gathered in Leicester

Central Baptist Church for a BMS Celebration Praise evening. It was an event filled with inspiration and mission motivation, including a live telephone link with the Nepal Action Team and drama supplied by the Translucent Theatre Company. Bruce Nadin challenged those present to be both 'sent' and 'spent' for God.





Flowers for BMS

Burnley District of nine churches rose to the task of producing a flower arrangement depicting an aspect of BMS's work. Using their green fingers they produced a wide variety of displays and miniature gardens.

Photograph: Set on brightly coloured Indian silk and with the addition of Indian ornaments the church focused on the work of BMS in India.



BMS at CRE 18 - 21 May 1999

Come and visit the BMS stand at the Christian Resources Exhibition, Sandown Park, Esher, and bring your

This is the best place to be, not only to see latest products and services in the Christian market, but also to hear key speakers taking part in the CRE lecture programme.

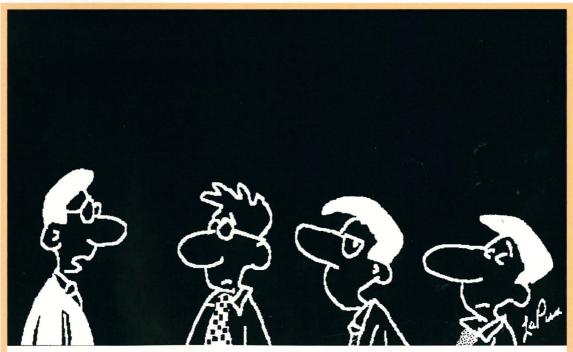
Outrage: Christian or Pagan?

hristians in the West were rightly outraged when an Australian missionary, Graham Staines, and his two young sons were brutally murdered by a Hindu mob in India earlier this year. However, the killing of national Christians, and the burning down of local church buildings, never seems to generate the same passion either in the world's media or the typical church in the West. Does this mean that it is the victim's nationality (or the colour of his skin) that determines the heinousness of a crime?

Most Christians in South Asia are no less insular or one-sided in their outrage. How many Indian Christians, for instance, have risked their lives to defend Muslim and Sikh neighbours attacked by militant Hindu mobs – or to defend Hindus attacked by Muslims? Where are the Indian Christian leaders who openly condemned the destruction of the Ayodhya mosque in 1991? Which Indian or Pakistani Christians have spoken out against the massive military build-up in the region and the whipping up of chauvinistic sentiments on both sides of the border?

We often like to quote William Temple's description of the Church as "the only society in the world that exists for those who do not belong to it". But, in practice, we deny it. How refreshing, then, to read of Graham Staines' widow demonstrating publicly the true missionary cast of mind. She told a newspaper reporter, "I am upset, but not angry. Jesus has taught us to love our enemies." If we love only our friends, Jesus reminds us, how are we different from the pagans? ●

Vinoth Ramachandra is South Asia Regional Secretary of IFES



"I think we'd get a whole lot more accomplished in our meetings if you all weren't so negative."

What future for Emy?



Living in a Brazilian shanty town world of poverty, illiteracy and hopelessness, where 90 per cent of children get sucked into crime, drugs and prostitution?

Specially for harvest, Streets Ahead shows how children like Emy can get a head start by receiving a pre-school education. BMS personnel Stuart and Georgie Christine are spearheading a project to give basic schooling in the São Paulo slums. That way the kids are less likely to drop out of school later on and turn to a life of drugs or prostitution.

Make sure you get the July/August issue of mb, containing a special pull-out section featuring more of how life has changed for Emy and her friends since BMS/Operation Agri took an interest in her future. You'll also be able to send for a Streets Ahead resource pack containing a poster, video, OHPs, children's material, project book, place mat, envelopes and other harvest celebration ideas. You can help pave the way for a

new generation too!

To subscribe to mh phone Rob Vaines on 01235 517617 or speak to your BMS Co-ordinator or church magazine distributor.

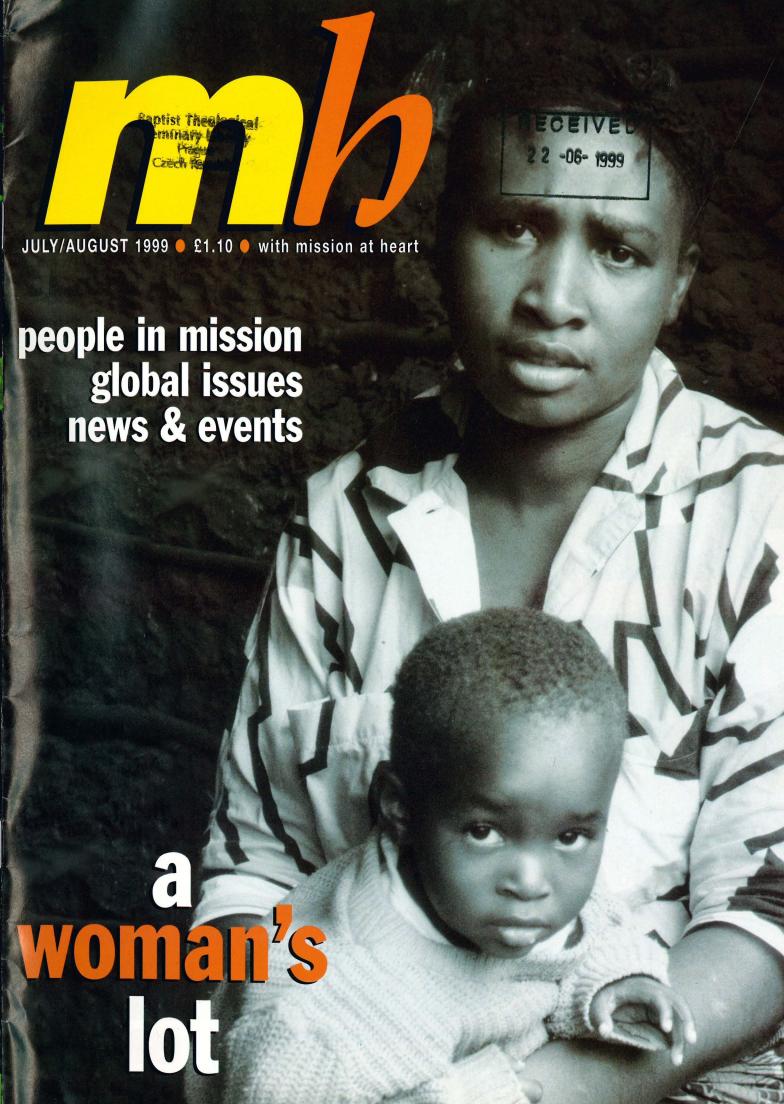


Harvest Appeal 1999

BMS & OA Harvest Appeal

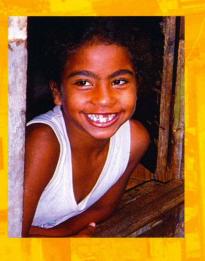






Harvest Appeal 1999







For your harvest resources

contact

BMS

on 01235 517617

TREETS

For Emy there is hope – find out why

BMS PO Box 49 Baptist House Didcot Oxon OX11 8XA & 01235 517617 Registered Charity Number 233782 paving the way for a new generation

BMS



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COVER PICTURE: MUM IN NAIROBI SLUM, SOAPBOX

PICTURE LEFT: ASSOCIATED PRESS

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world news

e've called this issue of mh 'a woman's lot', and in a nutshell it deals with the kind of everyday lives women in the non-western world are living.

But this isn't really a gender-related theme. For women in the west will be as far removed as western men from a real understanding of the struggle, pain and tedium of lives lived on a plane that condemns these female human beings to an existence akin to what we would imagine animals are relegated to.

Or is that too sweeping a statement?

In writing these words, am I just perceiving life for women elsewhere in the world as drudgery? Do I come to the topic with all my 20th century postmodernist middle-class western baggage, forgetting that life for women in the West can be tough too.

What makes my western upbringing 'right' and other different 'downtrodden' ways 'wrong' and 'inferior' just because they are culturally different? Is culturally different automatically wrong? And in time, will western views of societies that are culturally different be relegated to the same bin as past views on boys sweeping chimneys and using imperialism to convert the 'heathen'?

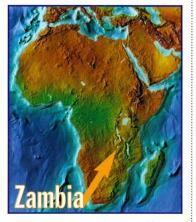
Why don't you contact me to let me know what you think? And whilst I'm on the subject of making contact, we are actually busily planning next year's mh magazine at the moment, and we'd be really interested in knowing which items and features you like best – or least. You can write, fax, e-mail or telephone me – addresses and numbers on page 3.

For good measure this time we've also included an insert in the centre of the magazine, which gives details of our 1999 Joint Harvest Appeal 'Streets Ahead'. Use it on its own or in conjunction with other resources you can send for to make your harvest celebrations streets ahead of anything else you've done before!





World





Zambia Prayer Focus leads to Death Row appeal

A Muslim man in a Death Row cell in an African prison recently contacted organisers of the annual 30 Days Muslim Prayer Focus, asking for help in his search to learn more of God.

The man wrote after getting hold of the daily prayer guide which is produced to cover the Muslim period of Ramadan. He said how he had been arrested and sentenced to death in 1994, and had received the booklet from

one of three Christian prisoners in the maximum security unit.

His handwritten note said: "I am not a Christian but a Muslim from my childhood. However it is here in prison that I have heard things concerning the lordship of Jesus. It is here on Death Row that I have even tried to read a chapter of your Bible. I write to you as a prisoner who desires to know God. It is my only comfort and encouragement in the situation I am in."

The international coordinator of the 30 Days initiative, Kim Greig, said she had been "extremely encouraged" by the letter, and had been able to send the man a Bible and a Christian biography to help him in his search. "We thanked him for his sincerity, and assured him of our prayers for him, too." (YWAM)

Brazil Evangelicals divided over sweets

Brazil's evangelical Christians – who make up 12 per cent of the population – are in disagreement over recent campaigns to target them with specially marketed

world news

news

products.

There are now sweets wrapped in paper that carry biblical texts with the slogan "The Word of God in every mouth" and others including Freegells Gospel sweets which depict biblical figures and cosmetics.

Another company offers perfumed oils for anointing.

One Evangelical leader, Pastor Alcebiades Fernandes Cavalcanti of the Evangelical



Christian Church of Belo Horizonte warned that the products could encourage vanity and called the campaigns "a new process of corrosion."

Other church leaders were less critical. "There are unemployed people selling these products," Carlos Alberto Tavares Alves, a



Hong Kong Red light district sees light of gospel

A church founded by converts from Hong Kong's Temple Street red light district has just celebrated its tenth anniversary.

The Shepherd Community Fuk Lam Church (SCFLC) has a special outreach to drug users, prostitutes, and people into gambling and violent crime. The outreach programme was set up by Samuel Lai, who used to be a policeman in the area. Lai used his position to support his growing drug habit, and went to prison three times. He became a Christian through a drug rehabilitation programme, and then returned to the Temple Street area to share his new-found faith.

The outreach is twice a month, directly in front of the large temple that gives the district its name. It includes a fortune telling table,

Myanmar

Baptist World Alliance leaders who recently visited Myanmar (Burma) reported that Baptist numbers were continuing to grow, but believers were still facing political limitations, and in some areas, the threat of religious persecution. There are now more than one and a half million Baptist believers in Myanmar worshipping in 6,000 churches and mission points. Baptists make up about 85 per cent of the Protestant evangelical community. (BWA)

Hungary

New legislation has been proposed to tighten church registration procedures after the current law on religions had come under attack for making it too easy for groups to receive legal recognition as a religion and avoid taxes.

Approximately 100 new organisations have registered as churches in Hungary, including societies practising naturopathy or organised for business reasons. (EBPS)

India

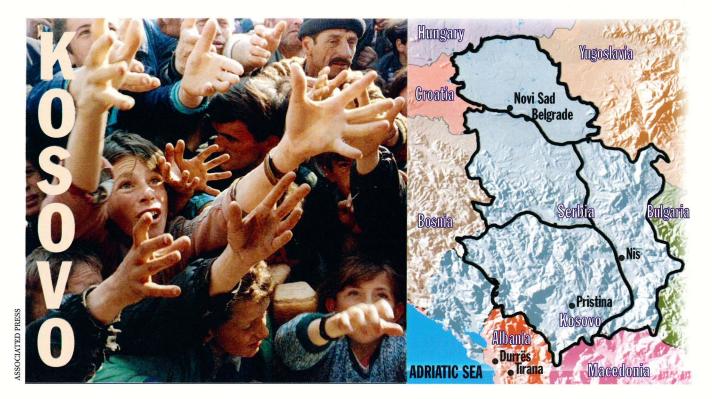
More than 2,000 people gave their names for baptism at the Diamond Jubilee of the Tripura Baptist Union, which was attended by over 3,000 delegates from all over Tripura – a state of North East India. Tripura tribal people have recently been overwhelmed by the majority non-tribal people and have been convinced that Christianity was the only way to preserve their culture and identity. (BWA)

Bulgaria

A number of churches – Catholics, members of the Orthodox Church, as well as Evangelicals – have protested against plans by Sofia city council to introduce regulations which will restrict religious activity. Although these regulations have not officially been published yet, they are believed to refer to the participation of children under 16 in religious activities, the advertising of religious events, and the use of property for religious purposes. Foreign missionaries will also be discouraged from working in the capital city. (Keston)

Peru

It is now believed that Peru's former clampdown on terrorism has led to many false imprisonments. An ad hoc Commission was formed to investigate cases of alleged unfair imprisonment, but even prisoners found innocent by this Commission – including Christians – are still waiting for release. (CSW/OD/TF)



AS THIS REPORT IS BEING PREPARED, HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF KOSOVAN REFUGEES HAVE FLED IN TERROR FROM THEIR HOMES, INTO MACEDONIA, ALBANIA, AND AS FAR AS HUNGARY, BULGARIA AND ITALY.

What local Christians are doing to help

In Macedonia local Baptists are caring for refugees in their homes. Churches with buildings are helping to accommodate needy refugee families – in church basements, sanctuary and upper floors, as well as under tarpaulin outside.

In Albania all the churches are totally mobilised and involved in helping the refugees. The Baptist Centre in Tirana is working with the Salvation Army in setting up a refugee camp, which it expects will eventually take 3,000 refugees.

How BMS personnel in Albania are helping

All BMS personnel have ceased their normal everyday activities to help with the refugees. In Durres the Albanian Bible Institute, where BMS missionary Paul Towlson teaches, is now a centre for refugees. Elisabeth Towlson is heading up the feeding programme there.

David Wheeler – more used to building roads in remote mountain villages – has been asked to build a kitchen at the Tirana Baptist Centre. He is also trying to rent a warehouse to house the clothes that are arriving in Albania by the tonne. Half of it will be used for sorting the clothes into size, age, sex etc. Families will be able to come along to the other section and select what they want.

Former BMS Director of Operations, David Martin, went to Albania mid-April to head up an Emergency Task Force, accompanied by Glyn and Gill Jones, former BMS missionaries in Albania.

How your giving to the BMS Relief Fund has helped

So far £60,000 has been given from the BMS Relief Fund to help these refugees. The money has been used to help in the feeding programme at Durres, assisting with the transport costs of getting food and clothing aid to Albania, and with David Wheeler's warehouse project.

One thousand pounds was given to assist the four Baptist churches in Macedonia with their relief programme.

You can still give to the BMS Relief Fund to help the Kosovan refugees.

Please make cheques payable to 'BMS' and indicate you wish your money to be used for 'Balkan relief work'. Please send to BMS,
PO Box 49, Didcot, Oxon, OX11 8XA. Or, for further ways of giving, call our donation hotline: 01235 517641.

"It is five years ago this month that the Rwandan genocide occurred and we are still at work in that situation. We have no idea how long the ethnic cleansing and NATO action will continue, but the needs will be there for a long, long time"

Paul Montacute, Director

of Baptist World Aid "The crisis situation in Kosovo is a mission field for the Albanian church. Since **January 1998 the Albanian** church has adopted Kosovo as another country to pray for. We as a church have been praying for Kosovo but have never had the opportunity to go to them. Now the Lord is using this situation and has brought them to us. Now is the time the Lord has opened the doors for Kosovo. Of course, our goal is not to take advantage of their situa-tion. We recognise we can show them the gospel by serving them, by caring for them, by listening to them, by living the gospel in front of their eyes." Geni Begu, General **Secretary of the Albanian Evangelical Alliance.**







at which enquirers get more than they expected. Instead of having their palms read, they have hands laid upon them and are prayed for.

Volunteers also visit the area twice a week giving free meals to many of those who sleep rough - people left homeless because of drugs, alcohol or having been abandoned by their families. The food is donated by Christian restaurant owners.

"God has been very merciful to the people of Temple Street," said Lai. "Not only did he (God) pull me out of my mess, he has also saved many in and through the Temple Street ministry. Most of those who were converted, and who have stayed behind have now become leaders and pastors at SCFLC, and God has blessed them with partners and children." (YWAM)

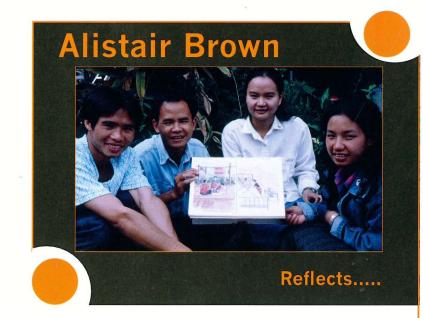
Turkmenistan Baptist sent to labour camp

An ethnic Turkmen member of a Baptist congregation in the port city of Turkmenbashi (formerly Krasnovodsk) has been sentenced to two years imprisonment in a labour camp.

Shagildy Atakov, a driver and car dealer, was arrested in December 1998 shortly after being visited by an official of the National Security Committee (the successor to the KGB), who threatened to charge him "on an old case" if he did not stop his participation in the church.

Atakov went on trial in

CONT. PAGE 8



The picture shows no ordinary bunch of friends showing off pictures in a book. They're a team operating out of Chiang Mai in north Thailand, doing all they can to try to halt the dreadful advance of AIDS.

Like many, maybe most societies, Thai people don't like discussing sexual practices, and don't want to be told what to do. But ignorance is killing thousands. So the team goes to community groups in cities, and makes long journeys to remote hill villages to pass on their health education message. Their materials are simple - mostly pictures and stories to illustrate their lessons - but the people who listen are grateful. Especially the women who are infected with AIDS because of the promiscuous behaviour of their husbands.

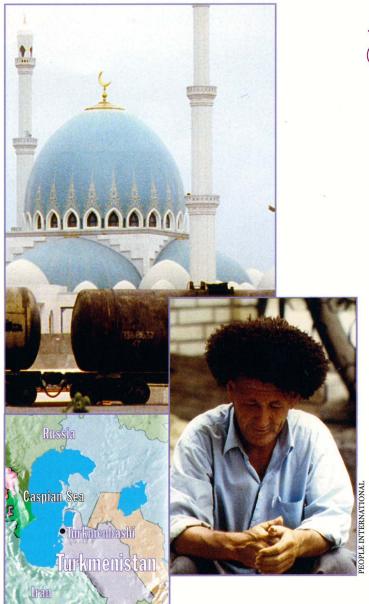
And the tragedy and triumph for one member of this team is how personal all this is. The young woman on the right is Suporn whose story was told in a recent BMS video. Not long after she married, her husband got sick. By the time they found out he had AIDS, she was pregnant and infected too. Her husband died, and eventually so did her baby. Suporn could have been bitter and depressed. Instead she found Christ, and for these last several years has dedicated her life to spreading good advice about AIDS and good news about Jesus Christ. Out of pain and sadness has come mission that is changing lives.

Suporn is now very sick, and she's recently been in hospital. Her body's resistance is breaking down, and won't last. But her spirit is strong, and she knows her real life is secure in Christ's grip. I pray for Suporn. And I pray all of us learn how to accept what's past, good or bad, and turn it to service for Christ's kingdom.

Alistair Brown is General Director of BMS



world news



March, where he was found guilty of swindling, apparently in connection with his car sales. As well as his labour camp sentence, he was reported to have been fined the equivalent of \$12,000, a huge sum in Turkmen terms.

Pastor V V Chernov of the Ashgabad Baptist Church wrote at the time of the arrest: "If Brother Shagildy Atakov had agreed to stop preaching, and become unfaithful to the call of Christ to preach the good news, then he would not have been arrested."

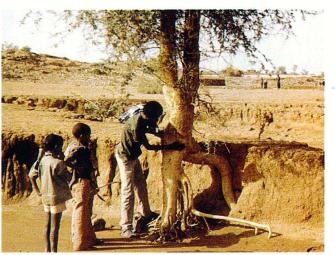
A Russian human rights activist commented: "This is a common practice of the Turkmen authorities, who try not to use political charges against prisoners of conscience but send them to prison for ordinary criminal offences." (Keston)

Apology

We received an objection to the heading – though not the story – of the "Hope for gender-benders" item in World News in May/June **m**h. We regret if this unintentionally caused offence.

action





Environment - Trees

Trees form the very basic stuff of life all over the world. The UK was once heavily forested, though now we have only a few fragments left. The trees were cut down for house and ship building, barrel and furniture making, for firewood and to open up land for farming and pasture. There was relatively little replanting until recently as people began to appreciate again the importance of trees to our ecosystem.

In more extreme or arid climates, trees are even more vital. In addition to the raw materials that they provide for the people, they act as a windbreak, help slow erosion by slowing down the water run off, and generally contribute to the health of the land. In Cameroon, tree planting forms an important means of improving food production and income generation. At the Rural Training Centre in Kumba, agricultural extension workers provide training, technical and material assistance in tree planting to local groups. They produce a range of trees - fruit trees, oil palms and cocoa seedlings. Another important aim is fostering awareness of the importance of trees within the community and especially in schools. By June 1998, eleven farming groups had raised almost 6,000 tree seedlings in their nurseries. Please write a note of encouragement to the Principal, Presbyterian Rural Training Centre, PO Box 34, Kumba, South West Province, Cameroon.

BMS, Baptist Union, Christians Aware, Church of Scotland, Methodist Church, United Reformed Church.

BMS WOMEN'S MISSIONARY AUXILIARY WALES ANNUAL BILINGUAL CONFERENCE

Pantycelyn Hall, Aberystwyth 7 - 10 September 1999

Theme: We shall rebuild (Nehemiah 1 - 6) Cost £92

Registration forms from: Mrs Pauline J Edwards, 8 Ynyswerdd, Penllergaer, Swansea, SA4 1AR Tel 01792 893477

Owen Clark

OWEN CLARK

CONTINUES HIS SERIES ON PRESENT AND **FUTURE CHURCH** LEADERSHIP IN THE **DEMOCRATIC** REPUBLIC OF **CONGO (FORMERLY** ZAIRE)

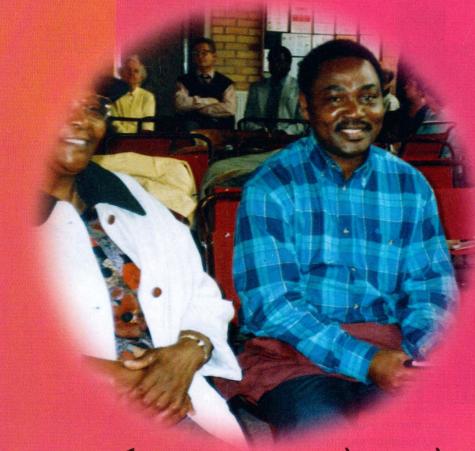
austine was on duty at IME hospital at Kimpese. Seeing a young man with a large suitcase looking lost, she asked dent if she could help. A medical student from Kinshasa, he had to contact a particular doctor. Faustine indicated his house. About to offer to carry the heavy suitcase on her head, she had second thoughts, "No, you can't trust these students!"

On the ward later, the student accompanied the doctor on his rounds. "Hallo," he said, "you're the nurse who helped me." Their paths continued to cross, in the line of duty, at a Bible study group and over a meal.

When Léon Motingia returned to Kinshasa, however, he said nothing, and to Faustine that was it. She didn't know that he had decided before God not to contact her again during the two years studies left, but then, if she remained single, to ask her to marry him.

Only recently had Léon learnt to trust his whole life to God. Born at Bikoro in 1957 to Roman Catholic parents, he attended Catholic schools. Not until he transferred to the CBFC secondary school at Upoto did he discover you could pray to God in your own words.

In 1975 the death of his father. who had supported his studies, was a devastating blow. Moving to Kinshasa, he re-did 5th and 6th year, and got his State diploma. Now began seven years of university



Dr. Léon Motingia a man of commitment

was a struggle to get by, and he sold bread on the streets.

In response to a sermon in the university chapel, Léon committed his life to Christ, and began to grow in faith and to seek God's leading. It was then he visited Kimpese.

Qualifying in 1986, he discovered that Faustine too was waiting on God. They were married in March 1987. Three years at Pimu hospital, three more at Yakusu, and Léon was appointed CBFC Medical Co-ordi-

In 1998, a BMS scholarship enabled him to study English at Selly Oak, before starting a Public Health course at the Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine. When back in Congo he aims to improve the CBFC's medical service, upgrade personnel, co-operate in development, increase concern for AIDS victims and use CBFC medical care to win people for God.

Faustine, now a mother of four, may join Léon briefly in Britain. She still regrets that she didn't carry his suitcase that fateful day.

Owen Clark is a church worker with BMS in DRC

daily grind



HELEN JOHNSTON TALKED TO JAN

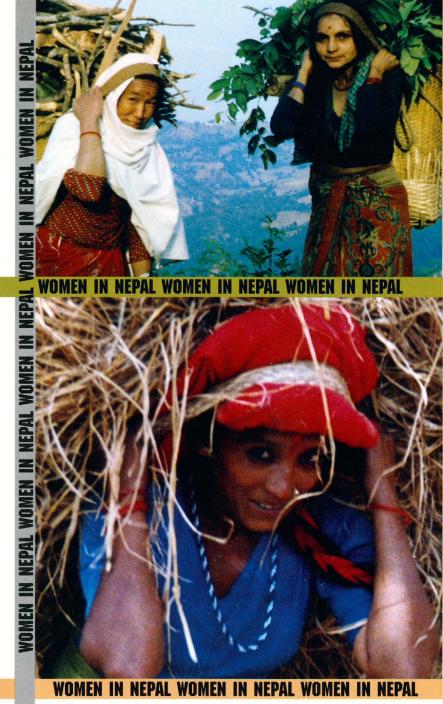
KENDALL ABOUT WHAT LIFE IS LIKE IF YOU'RE BORN A WOMAN IN NEPAL

he women in the household are up at 5.30am each day. Firstly, they have to clean the house, and carry out puja (Hindu worship), which, to the uninitiated eye, looks like flicking a lot of water and rice around. On some days they will need to re-surface the mud floor. Every day they will need to go out, collect water, cut the grass and leaves for the animals, collect firewood, and then cook their staple diet of dahl baat or thick corn porridge for the first meal of the day.

The grandfather eats first; then the boys and other children; then the mother-in-law; and lastly, the daughters-in-law. Mother-in-law can reign supreme in a Nepali household; the daughter-in-law is definitely the lowest in the pecking order. (The husband has probably gone out by now to the local tea shop to watch the world go by.)

For the women then it's back to the fields to do more weeding and planting. The water - grass and leaves - firewood - cooking cycle of chores is repeated in the evening. If the women are fortunate enough to live in an area which holds a non-formal education class, that happens later on in the evening.

It's the men in Nepali society who make the decisions. Imagine a hospital outpatients clinic. A sick woman has been brought by another woman. She needs an operation, but she can't have it because it needs a man to decide if he thinks she needs it or not, and whether he can afford to pay for it. Sometimes a woman's husband will be away working in India for months at a time, perhaps coming back home once



or twice a year. So she has to continue

in her ill-health and try to persuade him of her need when he returns.

To go to the hospital means someone else has to do your chores. At busy times like harvest the women just don't come, or, if they do, they come very late at night. Even after childbirth or a serious antenatal problem, they still say they can't stay.

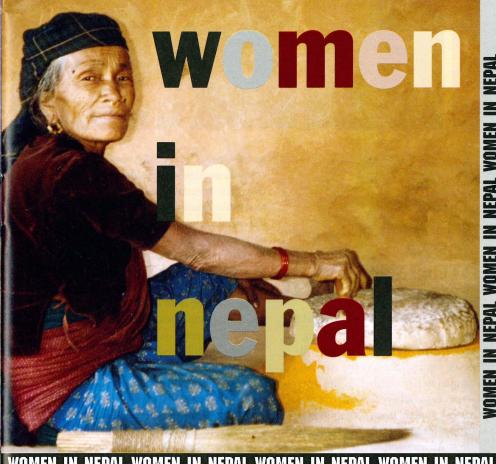
Many women in Nepal are severely underweight. It's quite usual for a fullygrown woman to weigh between 26 and 35kg (that's between four and fiveand-a-half stone). Forty nine per cent of all children are moderately to severely underweight. So it's no wonder that underweight girls, who have been married off by the time they reach

puberty, then have obstetric problems. Nepal is high on the list for the world's highest infant mortality rates.

In this male-dominated society women worry about whether they will give birth to boys or girls. The husbands want boys. One woman said it came as a great revelation and relief to her when she learned at a community health class that it was the man who determined the sex of the unborn baby, and that having a girl was not her fault. Wives giving birth to girls is one reason why men take a second (or third, or fourth...) wife. Women often won't consider family planning until they've had a boy.

Women come to Amp Pipal Hospital with many diseases and

daily grind



WOMEN IN NEPAL WOMEN IN NEPAL WOMEN IN NEPAL WOMEN IN NEPAL



WOMEN IN NEPAL WOMEN IN NEPAL WOMEN IN NEPAL WOMEN IN NEPAL WOMEN IN



complaints, including a collection of symptoms often referred to locally as "Amp Pipal syndrome" - heartburn, burning eyes, tingling fingers and difficulty sleeping. Abdominal pain might mean worms. Nothing serious, but it's an acceptable way of coming to the doctor. They often have minor psychiatric illnesses, but just need a listening ear.

Case Studies

Sunita

Sunita is a low caste lady who, today, makes pencil cases for a living. Her husband was working in India and she was left at home with their three daughters. On his return to Nepal, bringing money to her, her husband was murdered. Sunita was blamed for this, and put out of her village. In desperation she returned to her family's home. In Nepal you don't do that.

Today she lives in a small hut that doesn't even have a proper door.

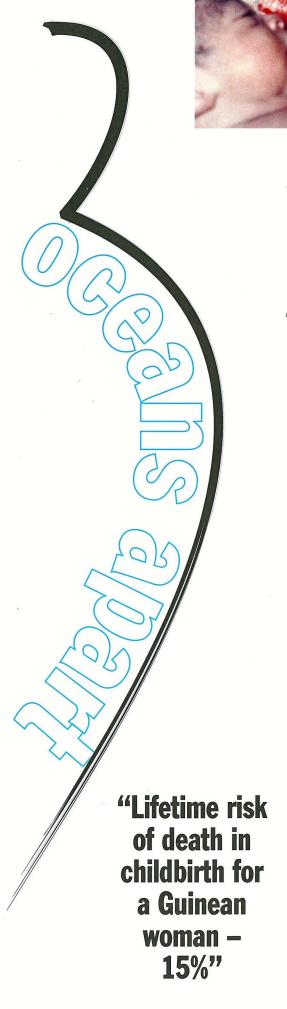
She married off one of her daughters, Phulmaya, who was aged about 16, to a boy of similar age, so that she would have one less mouth to feed. But the boy's family neglected to tell her that he had a heart problem, and was unable to do physical work. Within months of the marriage he nearly died. Her family's reaction to this? It was Sunita's fault.

So now she tries to have some sort of existence, living with her other two daughters, aged 14 and eight, making pencil cases. She is so poor, she has nothing to offer anyone.

Putali

Putali's name means Butterfly or Doll. Her husband - who had divorced his previous six wives because they had not produced sons does not work. Putali had a son by him, but he still took another wife - his eighth. Putali went to live in the house next door to her former home. The last wife left too. Putali's husband regained an interest in her, wanted sex with her, and beat her up when she said 'no'. She left her home, and went to live in another house in the village. She has no land, and is really poor. Her son has grown up now, and married, but he does not look after her.

Helen Johnston is a doctor working with BMS/UMN in Nepal









ALTERNATIVE CHILDBIRTH BY ANDREA HOTCHKIN

'm going across the ocean to find a new baby, but the journey is long and dangerous and perhaps I will never return." So says the African woman to her children at the time she expects to deliver her baby: a little dramatic you may think, but spend some time looking at the situation in the West African country of Guinea and you may just begin to understand.

The British Medical journal (5.2.94) reported "No condition other than pregnancy shows such a large differential in mortality between the developed and the developing world". Maternal mortality has recently been estimated as 2,906 per 100,000 in Guinea; in the UK it is 10 per 100,000. This means that in our town and surrounding villages there will be at least one maternal death a day.

But what does this really mean to the average Guinean woman pregnant for the first of maybe seven times?

Aissata Conde was newly married and pregnant for the first time. At 15 she was young and fit and healthy and her pregnancy went well. At the suggestion of her husband's other wife she went to the health centre to be vaccinated against tetanus, and eliminate one of the risks for her unborn baby.

As the moment drew near for delivery she wondered if she should deliver at the centre as they had suggested, but was reassured that births should normally take place at the house with the traditional attendant used by the family.

The pains began early one morning and all the women of the family gathered round to offer encouragement; the hours slipped by and the pains got stronger but there was still no sign of the baby. As the sun rose on a new day her husband began to wonder what was happening, but his enquiries were met only by a demand to buy a vial of oxytocin to help the contractions. This was hastily dispatched and given but to no avail; finally Aissata was half carried, half dragged to the health centre where it was thought another vial of oxytocin would do the trick.

Unbelievably to those of us who have been through labour it was on the morning of the third day that she was taken to the hospital; it wasn't far away – just across the other side of the town – but this time a taxi was needed. There the relatives were sent to find the on-call doctor and a Caesarean section was arranged but only after the relatives had again been sent into town to buy the drugs unavailable at the hospital and some gloves for the doctor to operate.

The baby was already dead but Aissata, although weak, was saved; her husband was relieved, although considerably out of pocket; that was until five days after the operation when Aissata started to leak urine all the time. At first the doctors dismissed it as an infection but it gradually became clear that this problem was here to stay. She was discharged home – now unable because of her disability to go to the mosque or to play an active part in her family's life.

By looking at one woman's story many of the reasons for the 300-fold difference in maternal mortality between Guinea and the United Kingdom are explained.

- Child bearing starts at an early age, the pelvis is not fully developed and can easily lead to the baby being too big for the mother.
- Old traditions die hard and the health centre is not seen as the right place to deliver, even if you attend for some ante-natal care.
- Traditional methods are mixed with new ideas, the better the midwife the quicker the delivery, so why not







use some oxytocin.

- Hospitals can be far away along difficult roads little more than dirt tracks or paths in the forest.
- Sadly even when hospital care is opted for, provision is poor and costly to the patient so people are not keen to use the facilities.

Aissata was saved. Many are not, dying of ruptured uteri, anaemia and acute blood loss before or after reaching the hospital. She was saved, but to what? A life of misery, with urine constantly dripping from her, and no baby to hold. All these difficulties are accepted by Muslim and Christian alike as the will of God.

So what is our response to this situation? It's not easy when so many factors play a role. We are trying to make the health facilities more acceptable by improving the level of care, decreasing the infection rate and introducing general anaesthesia. Traditional midwives are being trained to identify the cases with problems and send them to the hospital. A new maternity unit is being built capable of doing Caesarean sections so decreasing the distance necessary to travel by 120km. The staff in the health centres are undergoing more training so that they can refer more quickly the problem cases. We also have begun repairing vesico-vaginal fistulas, the cause of the leaking urine after the delivery.

And why do we wish to do this? Isaiah 64 say: "I am making a new earth and new heavens... There will be no weeping there, no calling for help. Babies will no longer die in infancy, and all people will live out their life span."

Jesus said "He has chosen me to bring good news to the poor." We believe this is part of the good news for the poor of Guinea. We want to show that it is not the will of God that so many women and children die in childbirth.

Dr Andrea Hotchkin is a BMS missionary and doctor in Guinea-Conakry

OXYTOCIN

A hormone used in minute doses over several hours to increase contractions of the uterus which, when used as a single injection, can lead to serious complications.

RUPTURED UTERUS

A tear of the uterus which leaves the baby dead and lying free in the abdomen and can cause severe bleeding. Often caused by incorrect use of oxytocin.

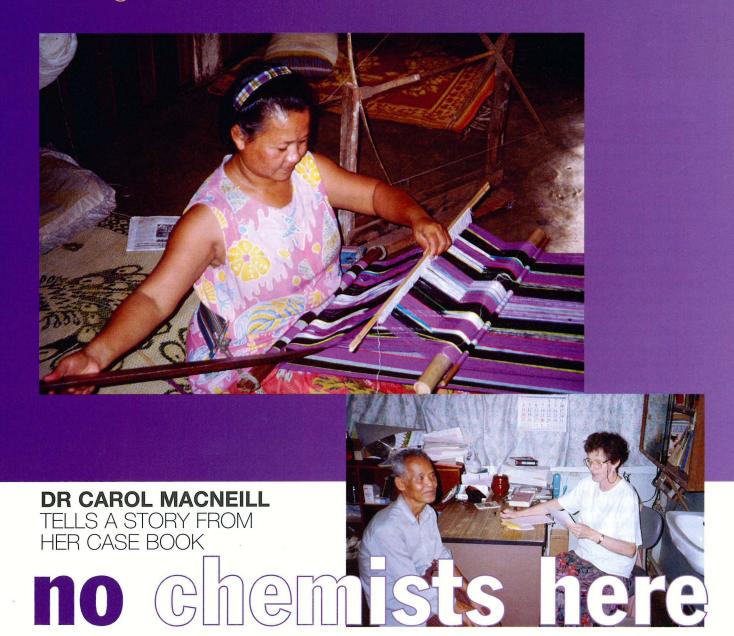
VESICO-VAGINAL FISTULA

A hole between the vagina and the bladder caused by the pressure of the babies head after a long labour. It has to be repaired surgically to stop the constant leakage of urine.

MATERNAL MORTALITY The number of mothers dying during and just after a pregnancy. Risk of death for a pregnant woman in Guinea 3%. Lifetime risk of death in childbirth for a Guinean woman 15%.



refugees



t was a warm, sticky morning in the consulting room of the Kwai River Christian Hospital. Opposite me sat a handsome, taller-than-average Karen woman with, what seemed to me the very appropriate name of Ladyrose. Her complaints were vague tiredness, no energy, headaches. She looked as though she was suffering from some depression. She was convinced that she had high blood pressure, and it was no easy task trying to convince her that her blood pressure was satisfactory "And that's normal, is it?" she said, checking it out again just to be sure. "Yes," I said. "Quite normal for someone of your age."

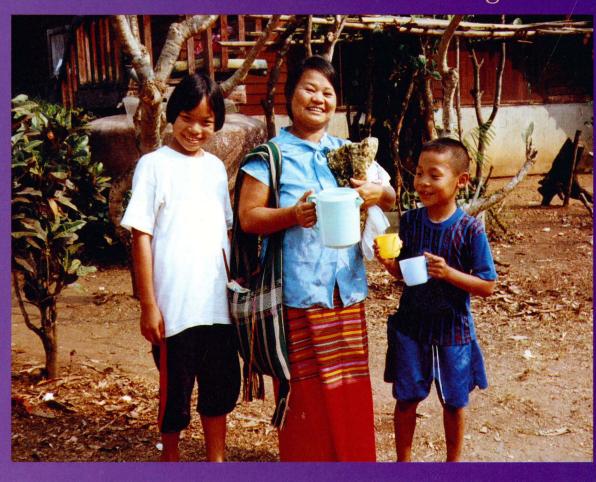
Her son is one of our neighbours. One day he mentioned to us that he would be away for a day or two. He was going to look for his parents. He had heard that they had crossed from Burma into Thailand, and that they were somewhere in the hills to the west of us. Being the oldest in a family of nine he felt that it was his responsibility to find his parents and youngest siblings and do what he could for them. As he spoke I imagined his mother to be a little old wizened lady. I certainly did not have a picture in my mind of the tall, rather elegant woman now sitting opposite me asking intelligently about her blood pressure.

"For someone aged 56, your blood pressure is normal," I said. "Perhaps then I'm anaemic or have chronic malaria or something," she suggested, hoping as folk do the world over, that her tiredness and lethargy might have a treatable cause.

She lives now in one of the many refugee camps on the Thai-Burma border. Her simple needs are catered for - basic shelter, salt, rice and cooking oil. She has little to do, little to fill up her time, and little to stimulate her lively brain. The camp where she is has church services on a Sunday, and sometimes there are Bible studies during the week. Apart from that, there is not much else to do but worry about herself, her slightly-more-elderly husband and her nine children scattered all over the Thai-Burma border.

"Well," I said, clutching at the straw

"If you live in a refugee camp, it is better to be really seriously ill,...
that way you get your expenses paid for you."



handed to me, "let's get your blood examined." Doing this would help in the reassuring process, as well as giving me time for a little more thought about how best to help her! Not long afterwards the blood results lay before me on the desk. Everything was normal, and the patient looked a bit happier. I prescribed some multi-vitamin tablets not necessary in this case, but always appreciated - and a few sleeping tablets to use occasionally when sleep evaded her for nights on end. I also gave her some paracetemol tablets. There are no chemist shops in a refugee camp, so it is a luxury to have a few tablets of one's own.

Before she left I asked her, "Can you come back and see me in six month's time?" "Yes," she replied, "If you can give me an appointment card so that they will let me out of the camp." "Fine," I said. "Will it mean that – and here I named the Non-Government-

Organisation supervising medical care and emergency expenses in this camp—will pay your bills for you?" (The answer to this question was quite important for me, as I had already realised that the medical expenses of a poor neighbour's poor mother would automatically fall back on me!) "No, they won't pay," said my patient. Then she said something that has stuck with me ever since. She went on, "If you live in a refugee camp, it is better to be really seriously ill, rather than just a bit unwell. That way, you get your expenses paid for you."

I realised many times since, how true was her remark. In the two refugee camps in our area, there are small bamboo-built hospitals. Basic illnesses, such as malaria, intestinal worms, coughs and colds are diagnosed and treated. The more seriously ill will be referred to the visiting doctor with whatever NGO looks after the general

needs of the camp. Only a few will be sent to the main referral hospital, the Kwai River Christian Hospital. My patient, Ladyrose, understood the system, and the dilemma of the 'vaguely unwell'. As she left me to make her way back to the camp, I remembered the advice, during medical training of one of our Professors: "When you treat patients, you want them to become healthy in body, mind and spirit."

Later as I paid the bill for Ladyrose – not very much really – I took some comfort from the fact that although her physical condition was just the same as it was when she came to see me, she was at least going back to the camp better in mind and spirit.

Dr Carol MacNeill is a BMS missionary working in Sangklaburi, Western Thailand.





RYDER AND HEATHER ROGERS

TALK ABOUT WOMEN (AND MEN) IN ALBANIA

yder used to have a t-shirt that showed a Christian fish going in the opposite direction to the sharks and predators.
Underneath it had the statement "Go against the flow" (Romans 12:1-2).

For Albanian Christians – particularly girls – of marriageable age to go against the flow is certainly an issue as they stand out against the background of their Muslim culture. The same is true for women in oppressive male-dominated relationships.

We have an 18-year-old church member in our congregation. Her uncle has arranged a marriage for her, not only without her consent, but diametrically opposed to her constantly expressed wish. Her father and mother have said she can choose what she wants, but still went ahead with all the arrangements despite her saying daily that she believes God does not want her to get married yet, and when she does, she would like to marry a Christian.

We introduced the parents to a lovely young Christian man – the right age for her, with similar interests – but they still objected. He wasn't tall enough and did not come from their birthplace down south. It seems the qualities the 'groom', who is 11 years older than her, is looking for, is someone who speaks English so that he can emigrate.

In another family, a younger sister who had little to do apart from housework, and whose greatest joy was in coming to church, was told by her older brother that she was at church too much and should be at home. He also objected to her praying with her cousin on a daily basis.

Then there's a new wife whose husband stopped working soon after their marriage. Now he stays in bed while she goes off from 6.00 to 8.00am, and then goes off to drink with his mates. She, then, has to stay at home doing the housework. He insists that when they go out she wears ankle length dresses with long sleeves and high neck lines. Her sister has also been banned from coming to their house by him because she came in tight jeans.

Or again, a girl of 17, the youngest in a family of three boys and two girls, has been told by her brother – the youngest of the three, aged 20, and unemployed – that she should not come to our school. He's also told their mother she should not go to church. The older sister had a dental appointment, and this same brother objected to accompanying her. The mother in the family is ordered about by him. Meanwhile he does no work in the house and gives his considered opinion that "a girl's place is in the home".

In another family a sick and elderly woman asks for help from her son. He gives her nothing; instead, he yells at her, and also demands work from us, yells outside the church about us making a noise during our service, and drinks all the household money away in raki (stronger than gin). When she dares to cross his wants, he beats her with his fists and a stick.

In Albania wives get beaten by their husbands for daring to stop off at a friend's house for coffee after doing the shopping. And so we could go on.

But there is a brighter side for Christian girls. There are lads at church who are real 'gentle' men. Beni, who is going in for the Albanian national weight-lifting contest, is gracious and polite, and his friend Soni, for instance. Both are so polite and intense about following Jesus.

There's Skënder who went to 'drink coffee' - the formalisation of an



"In Albania
wives get beaten
for daring to stop
off at a friend's
house for coffee."

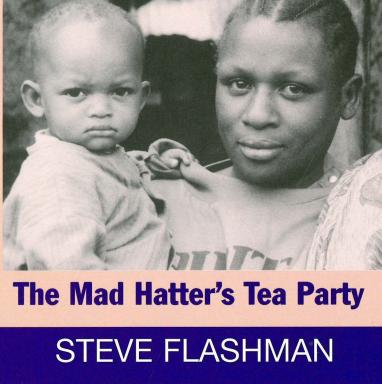
Two members of Bregu-i-Lumit church with Ryder (far left) Enjoying worship at Bregu church (above).

engagement, which is equivalent to a marriage contract – with a Christian girl from up north. He helps his widowed mother with cleaning, some cooking and washing some of his clothes. He talks about his marriage being a shared responsibility.

There's Fredi, who is an Albanian pastor in Tirana. He has just got engaged and has a Christian view of marriage as an equal partnership. He is both patient and gentle, and an example of living a Christ-like life.

We thank God there are those who are wanting to show that there is a different way, even if it is an uphill struggle for them.

Ryder and Heather Rogers are BMS missionaries involved in a church planting ministry in Albania.



I stood up in front of 500 inquisitive women who had come to hear me speak on the subject of feminism! My wife had been booked to speak but was taken ill and I offered to go in her place – a kind of vicarious suffering! I had read all the books, talked to a lot of people and felt I was reasonably prepared for this challenging event. I later wondered whatever possessed me to imagine that I could ever fully understand the issues facing women today. One positive thing came out of the whole event for me – I learnt more about hats!

I'm not being disrespectful here! There were many interesting, adventurous and bold creations represented in that gathering, but I'm not referring to 'hats' in a literal sense, but rather in terms of the many roles women play.

Women in Western cultures are having an identity crisis because they have to be so many things to so many people. Perhaps the search for 'equal rights' there has become a confusion with 'equal roles' for men and women in our culture. In many Developing World cultures, women also wear different hats: they are the bread winners, the manual labourers, the child bearers, the home makers and the play things. In these largely male dominated societies, women are stepped on, disregarded and often abused. While we debate the role of women in the workplace, equal rights and pay structures, female leaders in the church, the balance of responsibilities in family life and home making – cultures in Africa and India still use women to carry bricks on a building site, fetch water from the well, feed and clothe the family and be at the beck and call of the man in her life.

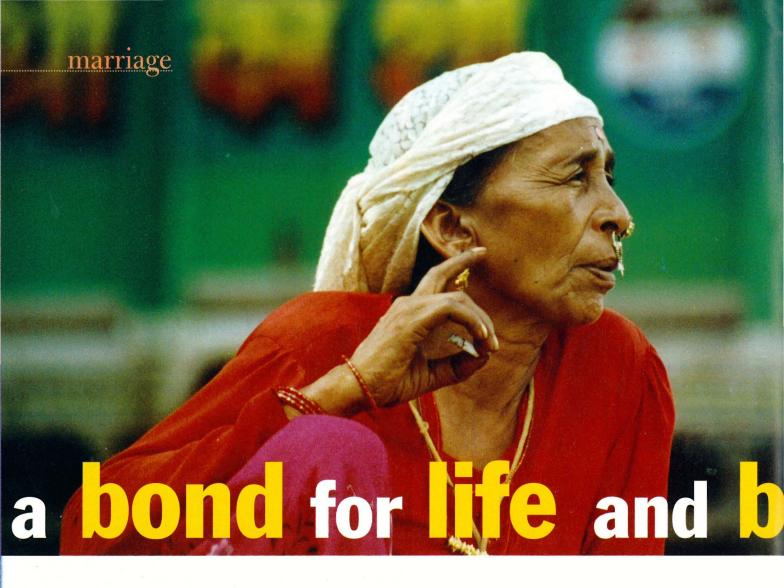
In those communities of the world where the gospel of Jesus is being lived out, women are finding their dignity and worth in the eyes of God and their fellow man. Through education and opportunity, they are discovering latent gifts and abilities that could turn them into brain surgeons, home makers, politicians, shop keepers, dress makers and chiefs of industry. This is nothing to do with imported, civilised Western cultural forms – in many ways we are still lost in a fractured and blurred view of God's intentions for us. It has everything to do with biblical standards of behaviour, Christ-like attitudes to others and being obedient to

Christ-like attitudes to others and being obedient to God's will for your life.

Wearing many hats is no 'tea party'! But we can certainly join the real celebration of life when we wear the right hat for the right occasion – and that's down to believing that we all have a unique and special

part to play in God's scheme of things, whether you live in the slums of Calcutta or the semis in suburbia.

Steve Flashman is a Baptist minister and International Director of Soapbox expeditions



ANDREW & MICHELLE FURBER

TALK ABOUT WHAT MARRIAGE MEANS FOR WOMEN IN NEPAL

magine a system of bonded labour for a child that begins before puberty is reached. Imagine that system continuing throughout the child's life with no way of escape. Imagine that the bondage continues after the death of the one the child has been bonded to. You have been imagining a situation that is a reality for thousands of women in Nepal. You have been imagining a Nepali marriage.

Blissful marriage?

Divorce rates in western countries give us no room for complacency, but marriage in Nepal is something different. Most marriages are still arranged and marriage between people of different castes still causes much commotion, sometimes even death threats. Marriage for most women involves leaving their parents' home and moving in with the in-laws. The woman is then socially isolated, worked hard and expected to produce lots of (preferably male) children. It is not surprising, then, that depression is one of the commonest diagnoses at the female out-patient clinic of Tansen Mission Hospital.

Happy ever after?

Mental health problems are only one of the many health issues facing married Nepali women. Nepal also has one of the highest maternal mortality rates in the world. Michelle recently surveyed 30 local women. Half of them were married before the age of 16, 30 per cent of them before they were 14. Two-thirds of these women had their babies delivered by an untrained attendant. And these are women who live near a modern hospital! These figures become much worse as you move away from district centres. It is not surprising that these women get into difficulties in

pregnancy and labour. One in eight Nepali women will suffer a death related to pregnancy or childbirth.

Ritual impurity

Social pressure does not stop with childbirth. It penetrates every aspect of women's lives. During her monthly period a woman is considered to be ritually unclean. In families that follow this strictly (of which there are quite a few), this means that the woman cannot enter the kitchen, should eat alone, and some even have to move into an outhouse the size of a dog kennel. In a recent report from a district where this attitude is especially problematic, a female development worker found it impossible to rent a room. Despite offering well over the market rate, villagers refused to rent her a room because she refused to go to stay in the outhouse during her monthly period! It took the intervention of the Member of Parliament before she was able to find anywhere to stay!

We have a Nepali friend who has been asking us a lot of questions about



Christianity. We were amazed when she asked recently if she could still read the Bible when she was having her monthly period! These ideas of ritual impurity penetrate into everything and add to the burden Nepali women carry.

Food for thought

Eating is another area where women are treated differently. They are expected to eat after the men of the family have eaten. Girls are given less to eat than their brothers. Iron-deficiency anaemia is more common in this area than any other area of the world, despite similar poverty rates and similar access to food. This puzzled researchers for a while, but the conclusion now is that it relates to society's treatment of women, particularly in the area of feeding practices.

Until death do us part?

The discrimination continues even after the woman is widowed. Tulasi is a Nepali lady who does some work for us. Her husband died recently and we found the bereavement process deeply

"Girls are given less to eat than their brothers"

shocking. Tulasi was made to sit in a dark corner of the house for two weeks with her husband's other wife. Taking second (or third or fourth) wives, despite being illegal, is not uncommon in Nepal. She was forbidden to wear red, her favourite colour, meaning she had virtually no clothes to wear until we bought her a couple of new saris. We tried hard to understand that this was a ritualised way of coping with death, but it seemed that again the women got the rough end of the deal. Tulasi's husband used to abuse her physically and emotionally during life, and it seems that he was able to continue this beyond the grave.

New life in Christ

We get annoyed when we read articles that are very negative about Nepal and her people. The Nepalese are amazing people and the country is extraordinary. But there is something about Hinduism as practised in the hills of Nepal that seems at times, frankly, evil. Although the Christian church has also not treated women well over the centuries, at the moment Christianity is offering Nepali women a dilemma. It is offering them great freedom from the oppression they have endured for too long. But this comes at a price of even more persecution from their families. We know several Nepali women who would call themselves secret believers. Jesus made it clear that part of his good news was freedom for the oppressed. Nepali women need and deserve at least that.

Andrew & Michelle Furber are BMS personnel, currently on Home Assignment. **Until recently they were** working with the United Mission to Nepal's Palpa **Community Health and Development Project.**



our town: Bossangoa





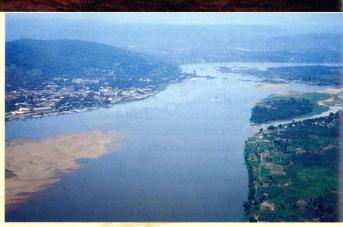
A SERIES **EDITED BY** JAN KENDALL THAT LOOKS AT TOWNS AND CITIES AROUND THE WORLD WHERE BMS PERSONNEL ARE WORKING

BY ADRIAN AND SYLVIA HOPKINS

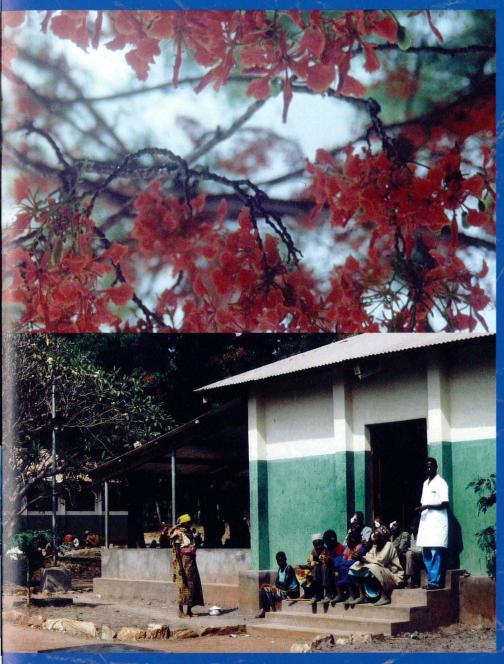
Background

Bossangoa is a fairly large town for the Central African Republic, having a population of 38,000. It is situated halfway between the capital Bangui and the Chadian border. The climate is a comfortable dry heat, although the temperatures are in the range of 30° to 40°C depending on the time of year.

Bossangoa lies on a central plateau which is the watershed between Lake Chad in the north and the Congo River (via the Ubangi river) in the south. The River Ouham runs through the town and eventually flows into Lake Chad. It's good for fishing, and for hippos if you are watching them, that is, and not in a canoe.



our town: Bossangoa



Above : The eye clinic at Bossangoa, Central African Republic

First Impressions

by Lisa DeCatur

People are very friendly; everyone greets each other whether by both shaking hands whilst saying 'hello' or just saying 'hello'.

CAR is a very poor country which is still trying to re-establish normal commercial life after the war in 1996. Women play a very minor role, and seem to do most of the work.

There are some who are well-todo, but most people just have a house made of mud bricks with no electricity. They have a couple of rooms, and go out to their large gardens every day.

All the Central Africans have is each other. All the members of the family take care of each other, whether they want to or not. One family may have five to seven children of their own, and then have three to five nieces, nephews and grandchildren on top. It's a hard life.

People

There is an ethnic mix as a lot of civil servants live here; the population is quite mobile as they get moved from job to job. The locals are Gbaya mixed with Fulanis, who have come from countries in the north and west. Arabs from the north control the majority of the commercial life in the markets and kiosks, and Fulani are nomads who look for grazing for their cattle. They are well tolerated, but there is a general dislike of Chadian people.

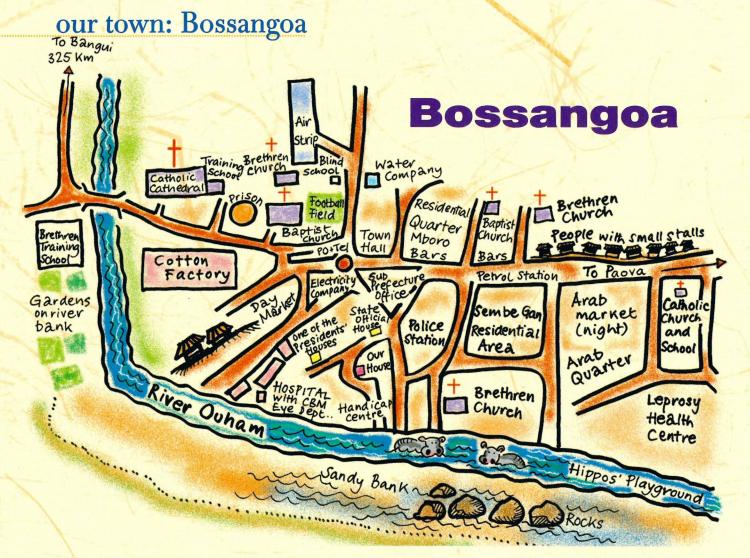
Health

The only hospital functions fairly well considering the state of the economy, although there is often a lack of medicines and the nurses are not very motivated at the moment due to non-payment of salaries. There are two doctors assigned to the hospital, but as one is also responsible for the health region, the hospital runs with only one doctor as well as occasional medical students. When drugs are in short supply patients have to buy all the necessary treatment at one of the local pharmacies. There are also several clinics around town which deal with minor ailments.

The average age of the population is 15, with a life expectancy of 49, but that is gradually decreasing because of the effects of AIDS.

Religion

There are quite a few churches in town of varying persuasions – the saddest thing is that there are many offshoots of the main denominations. Services are usually in Sango, the commercial language,



which most people speak in addition to their mother tongue. There are two or three services in French that begin at 7.00am. The Catholics have a cathedral with a national bishop. The diocese also runs a large secondary school.

Because there is a large Fulani and Arab presence in town, there is a small mosque, and all the Islamic celebrations are observed.

Schools

Schooling has to be paid for. In the primary schools it is not too much, and most of the children attend. Secondary school is more expensive. As is usual in most Central African educational establishments, there is a general lack of materials and overcrowded classes (70 to 80+). At the moment education is a hit and miss affair, as teachers also have not been paid regularly for some time. The French education curriculum has been imposed, and all lessons are taught in French from secondary school through to university.

The rate of unemployment amongst young people is high after they have left school. A lot try to find casual work in order to have a little cash, or sell items by the roadside, or work in the family fields, or they 'just sits'.

Housing

Housing in town is variable: tin roofs and cement bricks, thatch roof with mud bricks. Some houses have just a cleared area around them; others have built fences. A lot of people try to build their own house for their old age. It is possible to buy land, and not build on it for several years, so long as the plot is kept tidy. The toilet facilities also vary from the flushable to squatting plate with a bucket or the pit latrine (the most common).

Markets

There are two major markets selling food, cloth, hardware and other useful commodities. The morning one sells

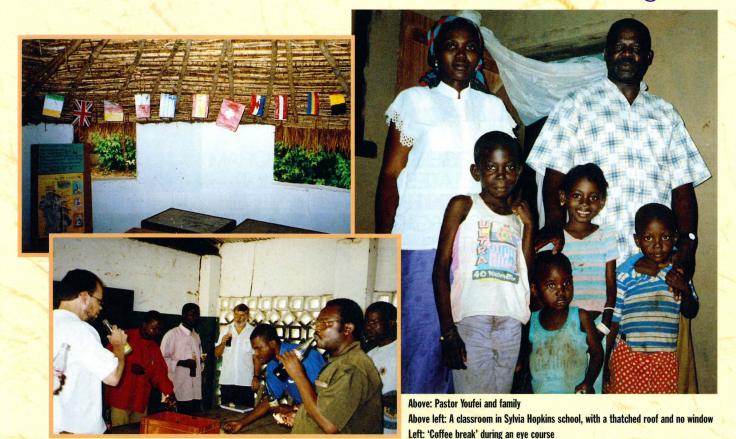
mostly fresh food with some clothing, while the evening market sells tinned goods and hardware as well; this is mostly run by the Arabs and is opposite the mosque.

Food

The staple food is manioc prepared a little differently to their neighbours in the Democratic Republic of Congo, but it is still heavy and glutinous. Green leaves with a peanut sauce in which there is occasionally fish or meat is quite a tasty meal. The more exotic fried ants and caterpillars are seasonal, as are sugared peanuts and sesame cakes. There is plenty of fruit especially mangoes and citrus fruits. Folk also grow salad foods to sell in the markets: fresh herbs can also be bought.

Everyone, including the people who should earn salaries, has a large field of produce for home consumption, as well as a little for sale.

our town: Bossangoa



Leisure

Leisure time is spent chatting, strolling around town, window shopping in the markets and dancing in the bars.

People come and visit, often without warning - no telephones in the houses! They come with a gift if they are going to stay for a week or two, usually soap, salt or rice. If the stay is longer they are expected to work in the fields or contribute more to the family economy.

The only telephone is at the small local post office; there is also a fax machine, but this cannot be used at the same time as the telephone - so there is no such thing as a quick call.

Social Services and **Utilities**

There are all the usual offices for taxes, social security (a lot of money is paid on behalf of the workers, but it's more difficult to have money paid out), water and electricity, which has to be paid for, as in the UK. The town hall deals with public affairs such as certificates for births, marriages and deaths. There is also the local court, prison and police station.

Provision for the blind and physically

handicapped is most frequently financed by private organisations, mostly from Europe; there are very few social services. There is a large financial input for AIDS prevention and education.

Transport

Transport is frequent between towns. with overcrowded minibuses or lorries, but they often break down. There are a lot of private cars, mopeds and motorbikes, but the majority of people cycle or walk. There is one petrol station which usually has fuel.

Profile Pastor Thomas Youfei

Pastor Youfei qualified with a Theology degree in 1988, and completed his Master's degree in 1990. At the moment he is working on a thesis entitled: "Theory of Mission in the Churches in Central Africa - A Strategy for Mission in the Central African Republic."

He is studying with the Grace Brethren College in the USA, and he spent three months there last autumn, returning home to his wife and four

children to spend four months researching his material locally, and writing up his thesis, before returning to the States to complete his doctoral

As well as studying, Pastor Youfei works as full-time pastor and director of the local Bible School. The church at present has 580 members spread over two congregations (French speaking and local language). There is also an all churches Bible study every Monday morning.

The Bible School has 25 students in two different years, but the course is for a total of four years. Once they have qualified, most of the pastors will work in small country churches. The student wives also attend classes in order to train others, lead services and take women's conferences.

Pastor Youfei also gives Sango lessons to ex-patriates, and has learnt most of his English from them. He asks for prayer as he tries to encourage the national Christians to deepen their personal commitment, and also to decide on their Mission for Evangelisation, especially among the nomadic tribes.

volunteers

MOORLANDS BIBLE COLLEGE STUDENT, MICHELLE WILLSON, RELATES HER EXPERIENCES WORKING WITH BMS

PERSONNEL IN BRAZIL FOR EIGHT WEEKS AS A BMS VOLUNTEER.

s the plane touched down on the runway of Fortaleza, I felt excited and apprehensive about my next two months in Brazil. The vast difference between rich and poor made an immediate impact on me. On Christmas Eve I went with John and Norma Clark and members of their church, to take meals to those living in the poorest parts of the city. It was a very humbling experience. I remember at one point during the evening, standing still and looking up at a row of cardboard houses, struggling with my emotions as I witnessed sheer poverty first hand.

Tuesday evenings were spent with Andy Eaves and the Brazil Action Team working with the street children in the city centre. This work was overwhelming; the first week I went I didn't know how to react, watching the street children inhaling their bottles of glue. All the street children needed lots of hugs which I didn't find difficult to give, even when they smelt of stale urine and glue. I was particularly challenged about material possessions when I saw two men fighting over a cardboard box to sleep in that night.

I sponsor a little girl in south Brazil, and saw a similar project in operation at the church I attended with Mary Parsons. I visited the children in their classes at school and looked at how the sponsorship programme operates. It challenged me to write to my sponsored child more frequently.

I went with Mary to the antenatal clinic she works at, and talked to the mothers about their poor living



standards and the times they have to be at the hospital to queue for a blood test -4.00am!

The work that impacted my life the most was at a Christian-run rehabilitation home for ex-street boys called Minha Casa, which means My House. The love for God that the boys have was so evident from the time I spent with them. Within three hours of arriving at the home, I sat outside on the wall and knew I had found what God wants me to do in the future.

From my time in Brazil, God challenged and changed me. I saw how much we have in the West, but learnt that this is nothing when we measure it to the confidence and security God gives us. It reinforced my need to put my security in God a lot more.

As the plane took off from Fortaleza, I looked out of the window watching the city get further away. I knew I had left something deep inside my heart behind and that God will take me back in the future.

action teams

IN FEBRUARY AND MARCH 1999, TWO GROUPS OF YOUNG PEOPLE MET FOR THE FIRST TIME AT 28:19 ACTION TEAM PRE-SELECTION WEEKENDS IN YORKSHIRE AND HEREFORDSHIRE. **ANDREW COOPER** WAS LATER SELECTED FOR THE 1999/2000 THAILAND TEAM.



aving arrived at Gorsley Baptist Church, Herefordshire, I was pleasantly surprised when I was greeted by the smiling and somewhat excited Carolyn Cole, BMS Volunteers Co-ordinator. Somehow she seemed to know everyone's name, even though she had only seen most of us in small passport photos.

Once the introductions were over we were set our first task for the weekend. Wait for it – we were put into groups and told to go on a little walk around the countryside, using instructions that we had been given. All well and good, but it had been raining and there was the minor matter of it being pitch black (I suddenly realised that maybe it wasn't a good idea to try and be clever by not bothering to bring a torch, as was suggested). However we managed it, and were then told that the object of the exercise was to get us to talk to one

another. Some would say that could also be done in the warmth and the dry, but oh no, not Carolyn Cole!

There were various games that followed which gave us a real chance to get to know each other. The night was then spent by some in sleep, but others found the true meaning to life by staying awake for the best part of it, and keeping themselves entertained by playing table tennis, singing songs, chatting to people and eating – well I did anyway!

This was all well and good, but we were then dragged out of bed on Saturday morning at some shocking hour – but for a purpose. It was to give us time to take our Bible, find a quiet corner and spend some quality time in God's presence. For me this was great

because I was led to a really relevant Bible verse, which resulted in a lot of thought and talk between God and myself. It definitely made getting up early worthwhile.

During the morning we had various talks and presentations, which were brilliant. I learnt so much about BMS and Action Teams. After lunch it was our turn. We were given various tasks to do, which involved drama, and preparing and leading services. This gave us a chance to work in teams, and also face the daunting task of performing on stage.

In the evening, the PARTY, (that's what it said on the programme) started. In reality an evening meal, and then various games, followed by an interesting session of dancing that was quickly terminated due to lack of tunes – although several DJs were available.

Sunday morning came, and after a morning in church, we had some lunch and lastly had a short talk and debrief. It was then time to say our goodbyes and get back to our normal lives... until September, when the Action Team year begins...

RAPE

There is a higher incidence of rape in militarised countries, where there is a great difference in the status of men and women, according to anthropologist Peggy Reeve Sanday who has collected data from more than 100 cultures. (LAP)

Sexual violence touches one in four girls worldwide, in most cases the aggressor is known by the victim/is often a family member.

FOCUS ON BRAZIL

75% of 11-15 year old girls, of any class, will not tell anyone they have been raped. The estimated figure for sexual abuse including rape, is 15-17,000 in girls under the age of 18 years. In Brazil prostitution is a legal profession. And on TV, every soap has its local prostitutes! This may have some influence on the difficulties women encounter when they attempt to take a case of rape through the courts.

90% of the people who report rape are from the lower class sector of society: generally a person from the professional and middle classes is too ashamed/afraid to go to the police.

ABORTION

Illegal abortions account for an estimated 20 to 25 per cent of maternal mortality worldwide.

More than 200 women die every day from unsafe abortions. (New Internationalist, July 1998/WHO)

In Latin America, only Cuba permits abortion on demand. In other Latin American countries, such as Brazil, Mexico and Guatemala, abortions are allowed in the case of exceptional or therapeutic circumstances, for example, if the pregnancy resulted from rape, or if the mother's life was threatened. In Brazil, legal abortion is not common only in cases of rape of an underage girl or if the woman is HIV positive. Illegal back street abortions number 1,433,350. In Chile, abortion is forbidden under any circumstances; yet 35 per cent of all pregnancies in Chile end in abortion.

PREGNANCIES THAT END IN ABORTION IN LATIN AMERICA

 Chile
 35%

 Brazil
 31%

 Peru
 30%

 Dominican Rep
 28%

 Colombia
 26%

 Mexico
 17%

 (LAP)

IN SÃO PAULO, BRAZIL:

In one year 1873 cases of rape were reported.

Of the 1104 cases reported to the womens refuge police dept, the aggressor was: 41% the father; 21% the step-father; 14% an uncle; and altogether 85% were part of the family

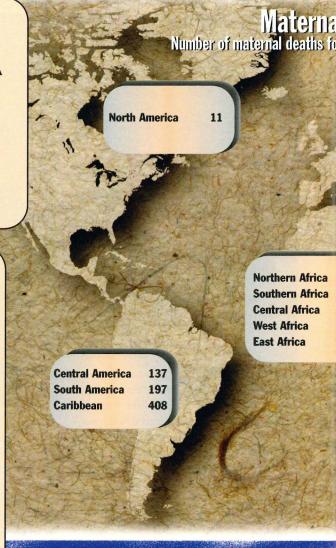
IN FORTALEZA, BRAZIL:

492 cases of rape were reported, ten of whom were children of two years old.

44 cases of rape were against children and adolescents 82 women died as a result of domestic violence, and there were 10,402 emergency calls to the police relating to violence towards women.

(All figures refer to 1997)

Most research suggests much of the physical aggression is committed under the influence of alcohol while rape is not.





A basket of food for one of the families whose child attends the Compassion International project, Fortaleza, Brazil

resources for leaders



mortality every 100,000 live births (1990) Northern Europe 11 Southern Europe 15 Western Europe 17 Eastern Europe 61

East Asia
West Asia
South-east Asia
South-central Asia

Australia/NZ 12 Polynesia 1,123

91

320

443

562

PREGNANCY

343

437

944 1,023

1.061

A woman in Africa is 500 times more likely to die of pregnancy-related causes than a woman in Scandinavia.

(New Internationalist, July 1998)

Pregnancies in Latin America:

Of the 16.4 million pregnancies in Latin America in 1994:

28% were aborted 34% were unwanted/mistimed 38% were wanted births (LAP)

MARRIAGE

One in four women in Asia and Africa is married before the age of 16.

(New Internationalist, July 1998)

The risk of AIDS contamination from rape is thought to be 20 times higher than illicit voluntary sex.

HIV/AIDS has become a major cause of death among Brazilian women. Currently there are 45,000 people with AIDS in Brazil, 22% of them women.

All Brazil information came from Mary Parsons, BMS missionary and nurse

ANTENATAL CARE & DIET

Fortaleza, Brazil

BMS nurse Mary Parsons did a survey in 1998 of 192 pregnant women at the Fortaleza Baptist Hospital involved in the Save the Child antenatal care project.

44 of the women had a weight of 8% lower than normal for their height and weeks of gestation.

135 had routine blood tests: of these 37 were anaemic.

A woman with poor nourishment during pregnancy is more likely to produce a low birth weight baby. Research in Brazil has shown a low birth weight baby faces an 11 times greater risk of death in the first year of life.

The Save the Child project has, for ten years, helped pregnant women in the high risk group by giving them basic foods: rice, beans, oil, cornmeal, powdered milk, iron and vitamins as well as multifort. The Multifort project was set up by BMS missionaries Mark and Suzana Greenwood both to provide a natural source of essential vitamins and minerals to pregnant women and to provide a few hours' employment to women living in the favela area. Multifort is a mixture made from bran, dried manioc leaves, ground melon, sesame seeds, and powdered egg shells It can be added to soup, beans, fruit drinks or cake mixes.





PROJECTS UPDATE ©



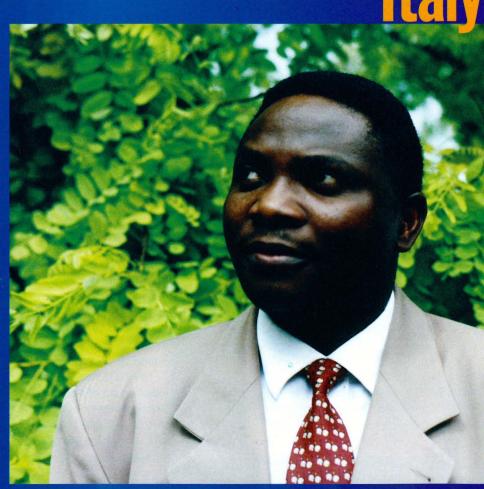
Project 9036

To support an evangelist and church planter in the Italian Baptist Union. Cost £9,000

Italy

Churches in the Italian Baptist Union have had contact with people who have emigrated to Italy from many ethnic backgrounds. Some have formed their own separate congregations which worship in Baptist churches, whilst others have integrated into Italian churches. Tayo Taiwo Martins (known as TT), a Nigerian Baptist, has been employed by the Union as an evangelist and church planter, to work with people who are themselves new to Italy; principally Ghanaians, Nigerians, Filipinos, Chinese and Koreans. The Union provides the accommodation and ministry costs, and BMS shares in the support of this new and exciting project.

If you would like to know more about how you or your church could support a BMS project, please contact BMS Projects Administrator Ruth Berry on 01235 517700.





Please pray for KOSOVO



Pray for :

- 1 Peace in Kosovo, that the Lord will keep pouring his Spirit on the leaders of Kosovo, Serbia and NATO nations, and bring long term solutions for all parts.
- 2 The hundreds of thousands of Kosovar refugees that are in Albania, Macedonia and Montenegro, that the Lord will keep watch over them and send his angels over these unprotected people.
- 3 For the efforts of the Evangelical Churches all over Albania to help the refugees. Pray for strength and resources for them.
- 4 Pray for volunteers from the churches that are involved in the humanitarian work. Pray for supernatural strength, and physical strength for all volunteers, young and old because they are all working too hard.
- 5 Most of the churches have put down their agendas and programmes and are focussing totally on the refugee work. Please pray for all the pastors and spiritual leaders of the churches, that the Lord will keep them strong spiritually.
- 6 Pray for Geni Begu as he feels the Lord has put him in a very strategic

place with his job as General Secretary of the Albanian Evangelical Alliance. Pray that the Lord will give him wisdom and strength to lead in a way that fulfils his will.

- Pray for the Kosovar church. There are seven evangelical churches in Kosovo. For the people from these churches, wherever they are now, pray for protection of their lives, their faith and their families. Pray that wherever they are they can meet with other Christians, and be part of the Body.
- 8 Give thanks to the Lord in all circumstances.

(from Geni Begu, General Secretary of the Albanian Evangelical Alliance)

To add to this we would ask for prayer for BMS personnel working in Albania, all of whom have put aside their normal activities, to help with the refugee effort.

Pray for: strength and stamina as they carry on this ministry day-in day-out. Pray that their health will be good and that they won't succumb to illnesses. Pray that God will be very real to them in this situation when time alone with God will be minimal.

- Margaret Gibbs, teaching the children of missionaries in Durres
- Detsy & Saverio Guarna, church workers in Tirana
- Nikki & Roger Pearce working in education and medical work near Tirana
- Anne Roberts, supporting the church in Bregu-i-Lumit
- Heather & Ryder Rogers, church planting in the village of Bregu-i-Lumit
- John & Lynne Thompson and Jane Waites, volunteer teachers at GDQ school in Tirana
- David Clarke, a consultant civil engineer involved in renovating Vlora Hospital
- D Elisabeth & Paul Towlson, involved in theological education and medical work in Durres
- David & Yvonne Wheeler, involved in engineering and nursing in Tirana

Kosovar refugees climb uphill to board buses leaving a temporary refugee camp in Blace, Tuesday April 6, 1999, on the border of Macedonia and Kosovo. The United Nations refugee agency has estimated that hundreds of thousands of ethnic Albanian refugees have fled the conflict in Kosovo, bringing stories of terror and forced expulsion at the hands of Serbian paramilitary forces.



prayer focus





Colin & Marcia Pavitt: Eldorado, Brazil

Colin and Marcia moved to Eldorado three years ago and planted a Baptist church there. Since then, the church has launched many social action initiatives, including a children's project offering education as well as fun to children who only go to school for part of the day. The couple are grateful to God for his provision in raising up someone to take over the running of the project, after its leader had to move away. While Marcia was at a conference relating to social action, she met up with a Bible college student who was hoping to do some work and training in the social action area. Everything fitted wonderfully into place and they have invited Mauro to do his college placement with Colin in the church work, and also to work with Marcia in the children's project. Some time ago their mother church bought a prefabricated house alongside the church building. This had stood almost empty, being used for storage and the children's library, so they transferred the books into one of the classrooms in the church building, and Mauro moved in. One of his talents is music, an area which Colin and Marcia have wanted to develop in the church, but have found difficult without qualified help. Now they say the church music group has improved 100 per cent!

Please pray:

For Mauro as he settles into his new work and gets to know the children at the project as well as the rest of the church members

For continued growth in this young church which is reaching out so effectively

to its surrounding area

for Colin and Marcia – for the continuation of good ideas for projects to implement, for health and strength for the right workers to be raised up to support each new endeavour

Karen and Simon Collins: Luanda, Angola

It has been a long and bumpy road to Angola for Simon and Karen, including more than 18 months waiting for a visa to enter the country, concern that they would have to leave if a permanent visa was not issued and searching for months for suitable and permanent housing. Now all that appears to have come to an end as the couple finally entered the country at the end of November 1998 and have since been issued with residents' visas allowing them to begin their work, and they have moved into a new home which is situated just 15 minutes drive from their places of work. Their neighbours are a young American missionary couple, Mark and Kim, and their four year old daughter, Brianna, who are also recent arrivals in Angola. Throughout this difficult time, Simon and Karen have been aware of God's presence and are thankful for his goodness in providing these things and for the opportunity to form close friendships with some other missionaries who have proved to be a great source of comfort and support. Portuguese language study continues and their language skills have generally been holding up, although they did ask one of the street vendors for car shock absorbers instead of insect spray! Karen has begun teaching two English classes a week, two hours each. One is for complete beginners and the other an

elementary class and all her students are trainee pastors at the Bible seminary. She says: "I have to plan lessons to cover all eventualities as things rarely go to plan. At present there are only two Bibles in the seminary's library for the students to practice reading English." Simon, a GP, is involved in community health.

During the time the Collins' have been in Angola, the ongoing civil war has flared up to such an extent that the UN peacekeeping force has pulled out, claiming there is no longer any peace to keep. Several cities have fallen to the UNITA rebels and the Collins' have heard of church members being killed. Many more have come into Luanda as refugees, often having left all that they own and having walked for many miles.

Please pray:

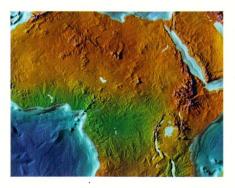
for the safety of Simon, Karen and their colleagues and friends

that they would settle quickly into their work and build good relationships with their colleagues – both national and expat

Sarah and Sylvie, North Africa

Sarah and Sylvie both headed to North Africa on the same day in March after studying French together at a language school in Massy, France. Sarah is working as a nurse and Sylvie as a preschool worker and both are also undergoing Arabic language studies.

Just prior to leaving the UK, Sarah wrote: "It has taken many years to reach this point, and although I have some niggling nervousness, I can witness to a tremendous sense of peace as I move into this next phase. The thought of



studying another language (never one of my strong points at school), I must confess, is at the moment causing me some anxiety. I do wonder why God has chosen me to serve him in this way but he knows that I will have to be utterly dependant on him. So I really do value your prayers."

Please pray:

That Sarah and Sylvie would settle quickly into their respective roles for good progress in language study, that they would quickly make good friends and settle into supportive churches

Simon and Kate Harry: Pokhara, Nepal

Primary school teachers Simon and Kate are members of Red Hill Baptist Church in Worcester. They went to Nepal in April where they will spend five months in language and orientation training before heading to the village of Syangja to share in a teacher training project for prospective teachers. This project will be linked to Gandaki Boarding School.

Please pray for:

ability to learn the language well that they will make good Nepali friends that Kate and Simon will stay close to God and will let him use them



expanding Prayer Focus. In this series BMS personnel introduce friends and acquaintances whom they meet from day to day

Viviane Kiri Kinshasa, Democratic **Republic of Congo**



I met Christ in Congo's western port city of Matadi in July 1992. A year later I began to feel a deep-down wish to speak of Jesus Christ to others, but I didn't know where to start. God led me to come into contact with friends from Campus Crusade for Christ, and I did door-to-door work with them, and rejoiced to see souls come to Christ.

I realised God was calling me into his service - through a dream and through Scripture - but I closed my heart to this. It was a hard time, and people were praying for me. After three years of fighting, I said "Yes" to God.

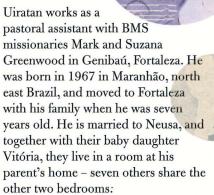
But having said "Yes" I faced another problem. Where should I go to study? I came across a yellow-covered book entitled "Ton rôle pour faire arriver l'Evangile aux extrémités de la Terre" (Your role in getting the gospel to the ends of the earth,) edited by a Mr Bonkanya (BMS missionary John Mellor's Congolese name). When I read it I discovered the existence of the International Centre for Missiology in Kinshasa. I knew immediately that this was where I should study. I was still at

Matadi (about 200 miles from Kinshasa), but the local Bas-Congo Scripture Union representative encouraged me to visit the Centre and gave me a letter of recommendation.

I am now in my third year of a five year course, and I bless the Lord for having directed me to the Centre by means of Mr Bonkanya's book. May God bless him. It's my prayer that more brothers and sisters will commit themselves to mission by means of this book.

John Mellor, BMS missionary in Congo.

Uiratan and Neusa Fortaleza, Brazil



Converted at the age of 18 at Jurema Baptist Church, close to Genibaú, Uiratan continued to worship there for the next twelve years. In 1994 he heard a powerful sermon on mission, and felt called to train for the ministry. He says he felt the need to learn more about God, and wanted to be better prepared to explain the deeper things of the faith, especially to friends involved in spiritist religions.

Uiratan believes he and Neusa participate together in his ministry, and they see their placement at Genibaú as valuable experience for future ministry. His prayer is that through their ministry they may help others to have a true encounter with God.

Mark and Suzana Greenwood (BMS church and community workers in Genibaú, Fortaleza).

bms news

Baptist House News Welcome to:

David McLellan

David returns to the UK to take up the post of Manager for Mission Partnerships in the **BMS Department** for World Mission. Since 1994 he has been working for **BMS** in Nepal as an



information systems consultant for UMN. together with his wife Catherine. Before going overseas David worked with BP in Aberdeen and London, mainly in information technology and system areas.

Miriam Hadcocks



Miriam also ioins the Department for **World Mission** team as a secretary. She has an art degree, and has also studied **Biblical** and **Evangelistic**

studies at Cliff College, and worked for **USPG in Luton. She comes to Didcot having** spent two years as the Ecumenical **Chaplaincy Assistant at the University of** Kent in Canterbury.

Keith Liddle

Keith joins BMS as a Senior Accounts Clerk in the **Department of Finance and** Administration, with particular responsibility for missionaries' allowances and pensions.



Previously he was headteacher at a school near Reading, but before entering the teaching profession he worked in the financial/accounting sector.





New Vice-

President

New President

Andrew Green has taken over the presidency of the BMS following the AGM held at the Baptist Assembly in Bournemouth. Born to missionary parents in India, Andrew became a Christian just before he went to university. He is now senior pastor at Upton Vale Baptist Church, Torquay.

Andrew has travelled widely, leading missionary retreats, and visiting missionaries in Cameroon, Brazil, Asia and Europe.

This world perspective has led him to see that sadly, many Christians compartmentalise their lives. In his Presidential year Andrew will be visiting all areas of the UK covered by BMS Co-ordinators, and will be encouraging us all to make connections in our lives, especially between loving God and loving others too.

A former BMS missionary in Congo, Steve Mantle has served on the BMS General Committee since 1992, and on the BMS Board of Management since 1996. He was minister of Pear Tree Road Baptist Church, Derby, and is now minister at Chasewood Baptist Church, St Anns, Nottingham. He is grateful for all the people, who, at various stages of his life saw the potential in him that he was not able to see in himself.

Steve would like Baptists in the UK to have the opportunity to learn from, experience, and value faith experience of Christians from other nationalities. He says, "I would love us to explore cross-cultural and mission work, in the hope that it gives us both courage and humility to recognise we can learn from Christians all over the world, rather than thinking ours is the only and best way."

New Candidates Accepted:

Kitty Brett along with Ken Robb and his wife Ruth are about to make the BMS history books as they have become the first BMS personnel accepted to work in South Central Asia.



Kitty Brett

Kitty has a BA degree in History and Politics and an MTh in Pastoral Theology. She spent her teenage years in New Zealand and is currently in membership at Camberley Baptist Church. Kitty will work as Assistant to the Executive Director of IAM and will undertake language study as soon as possible.

Ken and Ruth Robb

Ken and Ruth Robb are in membership at Queens Park Baptist Church, Glasgow. While at Queens Park Ken was a Sunday School teacher, Alpha group leader, and leader of a prayer and action group which works for the people in South Central Asia. He has been to Chechnya with YWAM, visiting a Baptist church there, helping with

their youth group, preaching and doing street evangelism. He will take on the role of Finance Manager at IAM.

Ruth too has had varied experience in Christian ministry. She has led shortterm evangelistic missions to Denmark and Ghana; ran a children's ministry at Ichthus Church, London and established a ministry with YWAM to reach prostitutes in inner-city London. She has also been involved in counselling women on issues of drug abuse, domestic violence, HIV/AIDS and sexual



abuse. It is anticipated Ruth will be able to use her creative skills and initiate work amongst the women in her designated country.

These appointments are subject to IAM approval.

Congratulations BMSI



BMS has successfully achieved the Investors in People award. This is a major achievement for BMS, and thanks go to all those involved in preparing for the award, particularly Michael Quantick, Administration Manager.

bms news

Other Relief Fund grants

As well as £60,000 given to help Kosovan refugees (see page 6), other grants have been made to alleviate suffering:

Bangladesh £15.000

An additional £15,000 has been given to help with the post-flood relief programme.

Brazil £1.500

£1,500 has been given to provide support in the favelas of São Paulo, following severe flooding. Intensive rain flooded some of the favelas where BMS missionary David Meikle is working. This money will help with moving some of the families at most risk and the rebuilding of homes.

Sierra Leone £2.000

This grant has been given to help with the shipment of food, clothing and medical aid to Sierra Leone.

Check Out

July/August 1999

July

Arrivals

Catherine & Robert Atkins from Toulouse, France David & Sheila Brown from Rio de Janeiro, Brazil Margaret Gibbs from Durres, Albania Wayne & Wendy Hadley from La Talaudiére, France Chris & Sarah Mattock from Carlentini, Italy Nicola & Roger Pearce from Tirana, Albania John & Lynne Thompson from Tirana, Albania John & Sue Wilson from Morsang-sur-Orge, France

Catherine & Robert Atkins to Toulouse, France Joyce & Stuart Filby to Ostende, Belgium Wayne & Wendy Hadley to La Talaudiére, France Philip & Rosemary Halliday to Paris, France John & Lynne Thompson to Tirana, Albania

August **Arrivals**

Elizabeth & Stephen Allford from Kinshasa, Congo Catherine & David McLellan from Kathmandu, Nepal Claire & Mark Ord from Genova, Italy Anne Roberts from Tirana, Albania Margaret Swires from Natal, Brazil

Departures

Margaret Gibbs to Durres, Albania Sue Headlam to Chandraghona, Bangladesh Heather & Ryder Rogers to Tirana, Albania

world mission link







Paradise Mislaid

Howard Bradley and Jonny Anstead - aka Paradise Mislaid - met when they were part of the BMS Action Teams. Now they are both studying at university, and using their holidays to write and perform Christian drama all over Britain. They say they are aiming primarily at teenagers and young adults, but their Easter performances proved that all ages enjoyed their shows.

'Love 'n' chips' will be on tour in the UK from 10 to 23 July, comprising of one hour, 15 minutes of comedy mixed with serious drama, in which the gospel message is presented in a clear and challenging way.

If you would like Paradise Mislaid to come to your church or youth group in July, please telephone Jonny Anstead on 01892 525080.

Bexhill Delight

Members at Beulah Baptist Church, Bexhill, had already collected £750 for the BMS Relief Fund Balkan Appeal, when they discovered, to their delight, that two



Muslim Kosovar refugees were present in their evening service. Mission treasurer Angela McCulloch said, "They hardly spoke any English, and obviously could not understand what was going on, but God had led them to us, to show them an expression of his love." At that same evening service members at Beulah were

also hosting a small party from Emmanuel Baptist Church in Timisoura, Romania, led by Pastor Marius

Birgeon.

Wye Valley? - Wye not? August Bank Holiday this year will see

the launch of the Wye Valley Christian Festival to be held Thursday to Monday at Gorsley, near Ross-on-Wye. Including the now famous Flower Festival, over 20 mission agencies are involved, and BMS's work will be

highlighted in the missions display marquee. **BMS General** Director Alistair Brown will be taking part giving the evening message on Friday. Others



giving input include Helen Shapiro, Eddie Stobart and Jonathan Lamb.

The Festival organisers hope that the event will attract Christians and seekers who may not be able to afford to stay at larger Christian conferences.





Photographs: Top: **Howard Bradley and** Jonny Anstead Far left: Romanian visitors and members of **Bexhill Baptist Church** Above: Alistair Brown, **General Director BMS Left: Symonds Yat** (photo by Steve Cooper)

inoth Ramachandra

Power struggles

omeone wrote of Jawaharlal Nehru, India's first prime minister, that he was like a Banyan tree-strong and firm, but nothing grew under its branches. Perhaps that comment is more apt for other leaders. Those perceived as 'strong' leaders are often insecure men, unable to learn from criticism and dissent, who surround themselves with sycophants. Little wonder they leave behind a leadership vacuum when they die.

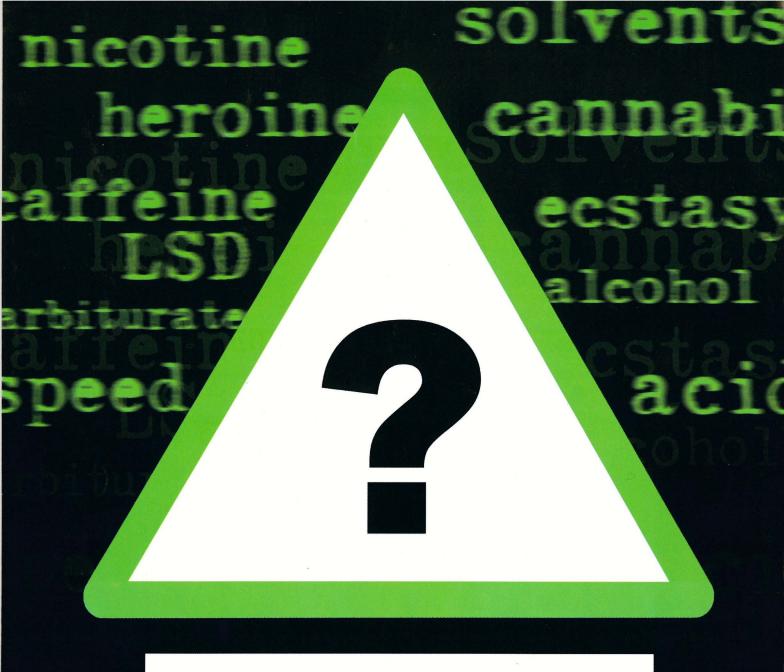
Sadly, many churches and para-church ministries are run by similar men. Everything centres on them, no one who is different blossoms under their leadership. A cloak of self-sufficiency hides deep-seated insecurity. Like political dynasties, power stays within families. Some well-known missionary organisations are still being run by expatriates. Many Christian institutions go through painful leadership crises when the "strong" leader moves on.

Cross-cultural missionaries, whether Asian, American or African, should be aiming primarily to work themselves out of a job. When this does not seem to be happening, the excuse often heard is that there is no national Christian who has the 'maturity' to take over. But this is to ignore the way we reach maturity. If God has entrusted his world, and his mission, to sinful and weak men and women like us, how then can we not risk trusting others with 'our' work?

But leadership requires not only that we pass on 'our' vision to the next generation, grooming others to take over 'our' work. It is the more humbling task of listening to the visions of others, accompanying them in their spiritual journeys and enabling them to obey their callings. Sometimes 'our' projects may have to die, so that God's purposes may be fulfilled.



"Forget the mansions. I hope that in His Father's House there be bathrooms - plenty of bathrooms."



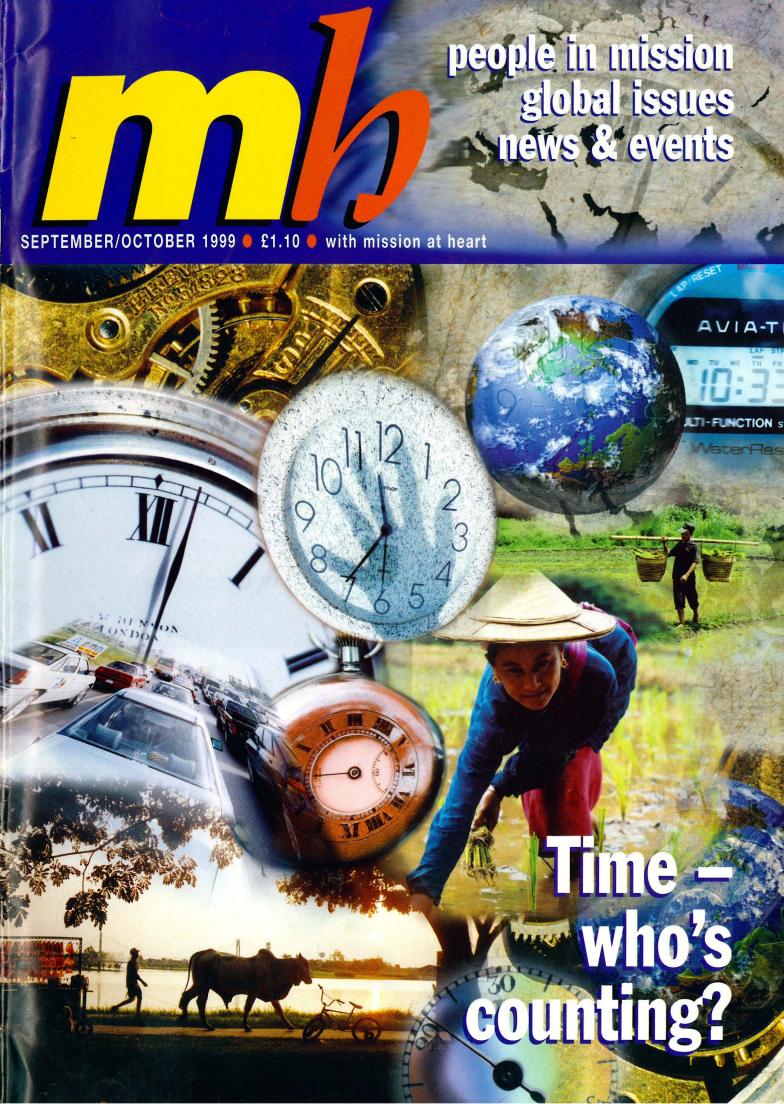
DRUGS

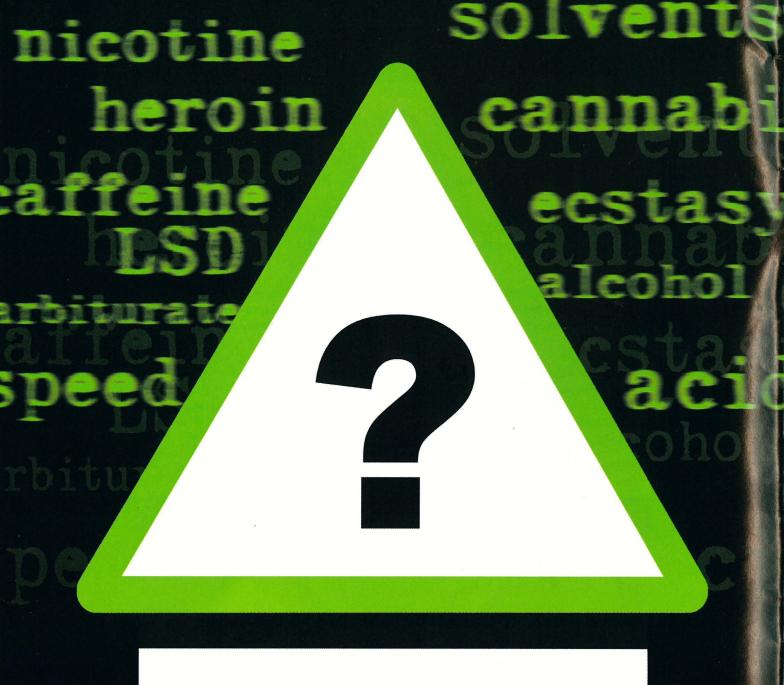
A resource pack exploring the issues of drugs of all kinds – from coffee and chocolates to smoking, alcohol, solvent abuse, soft and hard drugs. Presented in a worldwide context, these issues are relevant to young people in the 14+ age group in Britain today.

Pack available free of charge from Autumn 1999 Contact BMS Resource Department on 01235 517617 or email: resources@bms.org.uk for more information



Warning: Not reading this project could seriously damage your health





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Warning: Not reading this project could seriously damage your health

Baptist Theological eminary Library Prague Czech Republic **features** Time - who's counting? mb September / October 1999

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The views and opinions expressed by contributors are not necessarily those of the BMS.

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COVER PICTURE MONTAGE BY SARAH PRENTICE CONTENTS PAGE PICTURE CHURCH AT UPOTO IN THE SUNSET

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ime – it either flies by or hangs heavy. If you're engrossed in something requiring an attention to detail or having fun, then it swiftly passes; if you're bored, restless, lonely or ill, then it can drag. We try hard to give coverage to a wide range of issues and subjects in **m**h over the year. Some will, by their very nature, be more upfront mission-related topics; others will serve as background material for developing our understanding and broadening horizons of mission work and missionary activities.

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With millennium fever gripping the UK, we thought we would take a slightly more oblique look at a topic this time – that of time, and the importance different nations and people groups assign to it. And as for us living at the dawn of a new millennium – we discovered a lot of people for whom the passing from 31 December 1999 to 1 January 2000 will be just another night to be struggled through. There will be no special significance attached to it; no sense of history; no special occasion to celebrate.

(And by the way, if you are going to be doing something unusual that's mission-related, on the threshold of the new century, do write and let us know. We'd love to feature you and your activity on our World Mission

Link page.)

As a bonus you'll find our Christmas catalogue in the centre of this magazine. There are new ranges of goods together with old favourites, and we hope you will buy gifts and cards for family and friends. Every item purchased is helping the work of BMS, making Jesus known.

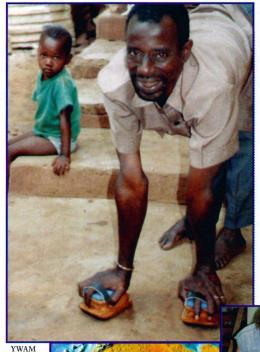
Hope you feel reading this $\mathbf{m}b$ is time well spent!

With best wishes

Jan



World



are unable to walk because of birth defects or accidents; wheelchairs and other such aids are not available because of a lack of funding. The Anastasis, one of YWAM's Mercy Ships fleet, had just completed a three month outreach in Guinea, West Africa. The ship's carpenter, Juris Zvaigne, was so touched by the people's plight that he turned to his workbench, to make recycled 'shoes.' "Nobody cared about them," said Zvaigne, a former tailor from Latvia, "and as a result they have even lost

interest in doing something for themselves." The wooden blocks are individually tailored to requirements.

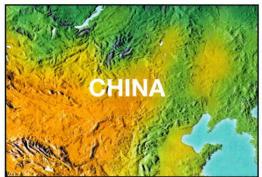
Zvaigne took some old deck beams, padded them with rubber formerly used for packing electronic equipment and added rubber soles made from plumbing materials. They are then strapped to their hands using a leather strap. Once worn they help protect against cuts and infection.

Each pair took up to five hours to complete as Zvaigne worked in his spare time. The new aids were presented when Mercy Ship workers visited the community to make friends and tell people about Christ. "I felt it was an important opportunity to bring hope – to show these people that somebody does care about them," said Zvaigne. (YWAM News)

Guinea Disabled get shoes recycled from ships

A forgotten community of disabled people now have a permanent reminder of the care shown to them by members of a visiting hospital ship. The community of Solidarity was set up outside Conakry by the government some years ago. The people living there

news



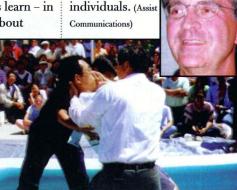
China/United States Chinese leaders learn about Christ

Hundreds of Chinese leaders who are studying in the United States have attended a conference in San Diego, California in which they learnt about the basic beliefs of Christianity.

The conference, 'China 99' was run by Dr Tom Phillips, President of International Students Inc (ISI), a 45 year-old organisation of Christian volunteers who want to have friendships with international students at US colleges. They help students learn – in Mandarin – more about

American culture and, if they are interested, also about basic Christian beliefs. Conference attendees were given a chance to discuss the implications of Christianity and consider how Christianity is relevant in China. The speakers were all Chinese Christian leaders from all over the

world. One of them, Dr David Aikman, former Beijing bureau chief for Time Magazine, commenting on 'China 99' said it gave scholars an "opportunity to learn as much as possible about how the Christian faith can change the lives, not just of individuals, but of entire nations." He commented, "I have always said that Chinese students and scholars in the US are the single most strategic missionary target group in the world." The Chinese students stayed with American host families, and were able to visit local tourist attractions. American Christians also attended there was an English interpretation available - and sought to make DAVID AIKMAN one-to-one friendships with Chinese



ASSIST COMMUNICATION

Brazil

Brazil's Catholic bishops have decided to ask forgiveness for its part in nearly four centuries of slavery, at next year's commemoration of the 500th anniversary of the first European landing in Brazil. An estimated four million slaves were transported from Africa to Brazil between the early 1500s and 1888 when Brazil officially abolished slavery. Priests not only accepted slavery, but sometimes even kept slaves. (LAP)

Italy

A modern ecumenical translation of Luke's gospel in seven languages – Italian, German, English, Spanish, French, Japanese and Arabic – has been printed by the United Bible Societies. It is available free of charge in hotels in Rome. The President of the Federation of Protestant Churches in Italy said 'holy theft' should not only be tolerated, but encouraged. (nev)

Guatemala

Proposals by the Guatemalan coffee producers to eliminate a minimum wage for their farm workers have been rejected by the General Guatemalan Workers central who say it will lead to exploitation of workers. It is claimed the minimum wage of US \$2.75 per day is the workers only guarantee of a steady income. The National Coffee Association has suggested paying employees on a per unit basis instead of a daily wage, maintaining it will increase productivity. (LAP)

Jordan

Jordan Evangelical Theological Seminary (JETS) has now received all approvals to purchase eight acres of land in Amman, according to a report from president Imad Shehadeh. The procedure involved approvals from Jordanian intelligence and government officials for land ownership. "This is full recognition of JETS and all it stands for," said Shehadeh. "God has indeed blessed JETS in its unique presence and ministry in the Middle East." (EBPS)

Kenya

Joseph Misha, vice moderator of the Baptist Convention of Kenya has said, "There are 400,000 baptised members in 2,100 churches and 400 preaching points. We have tried to reach every place, every village and every one of our 42 tribes." (BWA)



Russia Bible still a rare book

"The Holy Bible is still a rare book in Russia," Yekaterina Geneva, director general of Moscow's Library for Foreign Literature told those present at a launch of a project to supply 46,000 Russian Bibles to provincial and prison libraries. Although there are over 150,000 local libraries in Russia, she explained, only a fraction of them even have a single copy of the Bible. Fr Georgi Chistyakov, member of the editorial board of Russian émigré newspaper Russkaya Mysl, confirmed that there was a great demand for Russian Bibles in the provinces, and added that the distribution of Bibles in minority languages of the Russian Federation was also required. Fr Aleksandr Borisov commented that although translations existed in languages such as Mari, Moldovian and Yakut, these had been prepared by the Stockholm Bible Translation Institute and had yet to be paid for.

The President of the Moscow Interprovincial Currency Stock Exchange, Aleksandr

KESTON

Zakharov, is the main sponsor of the project. He said that Russian businessmen were prepared to support such 'loss-making' projects at a time when the country was beset with economic troubles. The brightest of them understood, he said, that no successful economic development was possible without honest and conscientious people: "You can't build anything worthy and beautiful on a rubbish heap," he added. (Keston News Service)

Australia Cyberevangelists unite for 'virtual outreach'

A small group of 'wired' Christians have established what is believed to be the first 'virtual' missionary

centre in the world designed to reach out to the millions in cyberspace. Other Christian groups and organisations have previously used the World Wide Web to present the gospel, typically through 'seeker sensitive' sites that draw curious browsers to them. Allan Carrington, the project's team leader said, "I am talking about being more proactive and going out into the cyberspace community, much like we do when we send teams out to preach and talk with people on the street; I know some individual Christians are doing it, but I am not aware of any organisation that is." Carrington, a former printing and publishing businessman has over the past few years helped develop the use of the web by YWAM, and now has linked with others in Australia and the United States, Members of the team 'meet' together daily on-line to swap updates and prayer requests before 'going out' to share their faith in chat rooms, forums and networks. "It's a very small start," said Carrington, "but the possibilities for ministry are enormous. The Internet

problems or concerns, and we have an opportunity to come alongside and befriend them. I heard of one retired man who led several people to Christ in just a few months by going on-line. "Linking the cyberevangelists in a team is important. A lot of Christians shy away from the Internet because of the negative way it is used for things like pornography. Christians need to be able to support and encourage one another much as we would if we sent a team to do ministry in the red light district of some city. But as new communities and cultures are formed in cyberspace we have to be there among them, as Christians. Young people especially are rejecting the traditional infrastructures like the Church and turning to the Internet. One futurist has said that in the new millennium young people will be looking for their spiritual answers on the Web." CYWAM http://www.unity.net.au/cywam (YWAM News)



community is growing all the time, and in many ways it is a whole new mission field that has opened up to

"Many people out there on the Web are looking for answers; they may have personal



Georgia

Police break up evangelistic meeting

Georgian police have been accused of breaking up a series of evangelical rallies held in the Gldani district of the capital Tbilisi by the Pentecostal Madli Evangelical Church. Rallies held at the end of May on a Tbilisi housing estate were interrupted, and the pastor and congregation assaulted and verbally



sanction.

Rallies were held on 28 and 29 May; on the second day the pastor and his wife were asked to go to the Gldani police station, where they were asked to give a complete list of the names of people in their congregation. They refused to give the list, and after two hours were allowed to leave. They were not forbidden to meet publicly but were asked for the volume on the sound system to be reduced. On the next night their meeting was again interrupted, first of all by the police officers, and later by the Assistant Police Chief Ekizashvili who stormed into the meeting and forcibly removed the microphone from Pastor Tkeshelashvili as he was speaking. He insulted him and his wife, saying, "Go away from this place, I will kill you all!"

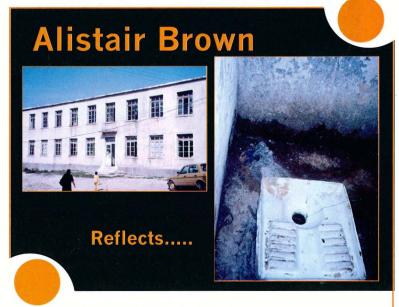


abused by the Gldani police. The church had informed the police of the events before the rallies took place. The pastor Zaali Tkeshelashvili commented, "They didn't ban them, and told us they could go ahead." He believes the Gldani police themselves took the initiative in seeking to stop the rallies and attack participants, without official

Ekizashvili lost self-control; struck the pastor's wife and pushed a 60-year old woman to the ground. This entire episode was recorded on video and in photographs.

Soon after the Police Chief Tamaz Davitashvili arrived.

Together with the other officers he attacked congregational members who were trying to protect



I prefer prettier pictures than those which surround these words. They're outside and inside photos of the infectious diseases unit at Vlora hospital, Albania. When I was there in 1997 conditions were grim – broken windows, fungus infested walls, poorly equipped wards. Staff were making the best of a near-impossible situation.

Things are changing. With help from a special gift, BMS is transforming the building so that it's clean, bright and better equipped. The 'after' pictures should be wonderful compared to these 'before' shots.

But much about Albania isn't changing yet. Systems are weak, resources are few, people are desperately poor. It's the most impoverished nation in Europe.

That's made it hard for Albanians to watch the lavish outpouring of gifts and aid on the Kosovan refugees, and the vast amount of help being given to rebuild their land. Yes, they need aid, but many Kosovans are better off than most Albanians. And the Albanians aren't getting anything like the same help.

Through BMS many have been helping Kosovans. We'll keep doing so. But we won't forget neighbouring Albania. God's love doesn't come in blitzes. It goes on and on. Our love must be like that too. ●

Alistair Brown is General Director of BMS

the pastor. One member was thrown to the ground, kicked in the head and face, leaving him with three loose teeth; another was hit in the face and choked; others, including the pastor, were beaten.

Immediately after this the police sought to arrest Pastor Tkeshelashvili, and 11 other members of the congregation; and to track down and remove the videotape documenting their violence against the congregation

The group went into hiding for several days, and eventually left Gldani with the help of some American friends. (Keston News Service)



YWAM

India

Slum **improvements** open door for gospel

Missionary workers in Madras have helped hundreds of families escape flooding and sickness by laying concrete floors in their cramped, one-room homes.

Although the homes in this part of the city, where about 12,000 people live, have brick walls, tiled roofs and electricity, the mud floors became soaked during the monsoon season.

The missionaries arranged for the floors to be raised and bricked, and the walls plastered to further reduce damp. Residents were asked to make a small contribution to the \$20 per home cost, with the work carried out by a local mason who had become a Christian. "The places are far more

livable-in now. Because the area is next to a lake it would often flood or moisture would seep in. Now that the floors and walls are



cemented things are much cleaner, drier and nicer to live in," said Trevor Edgeworth, the programme overseer.

"We had the opportunity to share the gospel with many people through this project," he added. "Because they knew we were Christian social workers who were trying to help improve their lives, people would often ask questions about their situation and we were able to share with them, pray for them and demonstrate how we could bring about some change."

Since they began work in the area, staff have started a church and established a Sunday school programme that caters for over 1,000 children every Sunday. They are also involved in literacy training, medical care and a day care programme. More recently they have started a savings service that involves over 200 women from the area. "We opened it because there are local money lenders who charge high interest which the people cannot pay back. They are then in financial bondage for years, and sometimes even end up having to give their possessions to the money lender to get out of debt." In this programme participants pay 30p each week to small groups, whose members decide where the money should be loaned. So far recipients have used the money to start local businesses to help support their families. (YWAM News)



Caring for War Victims

"The Renamo guerrillas came at 6.00am this morning," says Salida, a nurse at Chicuque Rural Methodist Hospital, Mozambique. "The next six hours I will never forget. My 25year-old nephew was attacked. They cut his neck from his body in front of me. I fled and came to this hospital. I had to have courage. My faith kept me alive."

Her faith and that of the other nurses at Chicuque Hospital also kept many others alive. Throughout the civil war that tore Mozambique apart until the peace of 1992, they had to deal with endless war-related injuries. And in the few years following the war, the hospital's admissions were dominated by people hurt by landmines.

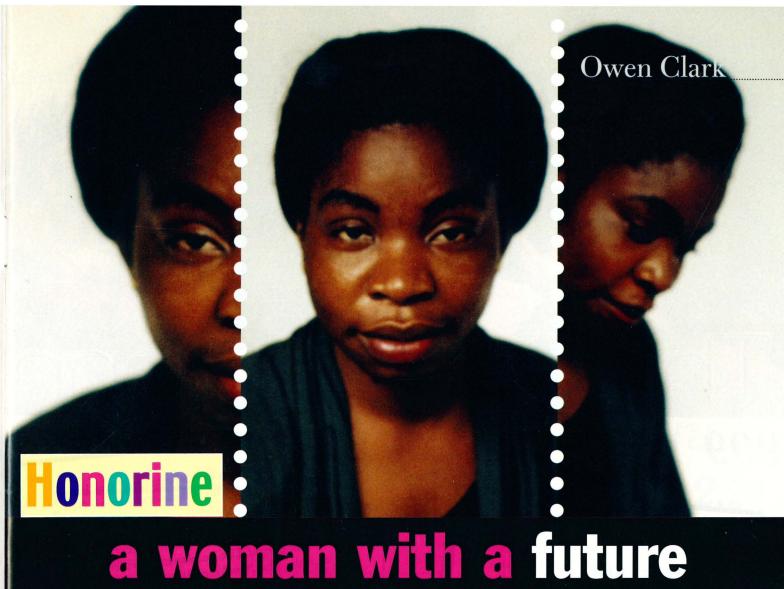
While those injuries have now fallen sharply, the nurses are still overloaded with work, as Chicuque Hospital is a regional medical centre. Home-related accidents are numerous, such as burns caused by domestic fires, and the hospital staff are taking an increasingly educational role in the community. Nurses at Bollobhur Hospital in Bangladesh face similar problems. "Please pray for seven-year-old Rubel, who was severely burned after the towel that he wore around his waist caught fire," says Gillian Rose, a UK missionary with the Church of Bangladesh. "Burns are a huge problem in the dry and dusty land, where it is impossible to keep anything clean. As with most other patients, Rubel was not brought here immediately after the accident. He arrived with all manner of strange concoctions smeared all over him, and already infected. It will take months for him to heal."

Please pray for these nurses and send your card, offering encouragement to: **Thomas Sengo** or to: **Escola Biblica Likumbe**

PO Box 142 **Maxixe-Inhambane** Mozambique

Bollobhur Hospital PO Kedargoni Dt Mehepur **Bangladesh**

BMS, Baptist Union, Christians Aware, Church of Scotland, Methodist Church, United Reformed Church.



OWEN CLARK

CONTINUES HIS
SERIES ON PRESENT
AND FUTURE
CHURCH LEADERSHIP IN THE
DEMOCRATIC
REPUBLIC OF
CONGO (FORMERLY
ZAIRE)

t last the July 1998 State Exam results were coming out. Now April 1999, it had been a long wait. The morning the Pedagogy list was published, Honorine hurried to the nearest newspaper stand. Breathless, she peered over a shoulder. Was her name there? Suddenly it leapt into focus. Matuzele Honorine! With a shriek, she turned and fled. She'd made it!

Finished school and got her State diploma! At 28.

Honorine had left her village at the age of nine to join an older sister in Kinshasa. At Lisala church she attended a class which led to her baptism at 12. Eager to learn, she joined every course, seminar or retreat she could, and grew. In time she took her turn to help others to grow - led Bible Studies, trained in literacy work, taught women to read and went to Bolobo with a team to train other people. In house groups and women's meetings, she learnt to preach and under the Kinshasa regional evangelist, she faithfully served a struggling cause at Mikonga, beyond the airport, leading, preaching, visiting homes and organising.

By 1994, now 23, Honorine was a mature, active Christian and a valuable church worker. Yet she felt at a crossroads. Having abandoned secondary school in her fourth year for lack of financial support, she couldn't go on

to further training. Should she look instead to marry and raise a family? She prayed that God would either open the way to go back to school, or provide a husband. At a seminar at Kimpese the answer came and, back in Kinshasa, she opted for school. Not easy - four years in school uniform with younger girls, submitting to the discipline, fending off male teachers - but she was heading somewhere. Friends provided the means, and she did the work - year by hard won year, until the State exams. No wonder she shrieked when she saw her name in the list.

There's still a hard road ahead. She wants to prepare to better serve Christ and her country by studying Theology, Mission and Development—the biggest obstacle the cost. Honorine believes, however, that God loves her and has guided her steps to this point. Also, that her future is safe in his hands. •

Owen Clark is a church worker with BMS in DRC





in the year when Bangkok is quite a pleasant place to drive around - and on all three occasions it's because it is New Year! But the lack of millennium fever is not only due to following a different calendar. Even if the calendar was the same, it is unlikely that the millennium idea would generate the same excitement here. There is, in fact, no Thai word for millennium. Look up the word 'decade' or 'century' in an English/Thai dictionary and you will find a single Thai word with the identical meaning. But with the word 'millennium' the dictionary must resort to explaining that this refers to a period of one thousand years, for the Thai language manages quite well without a particular word for this period of time.

And really that makes a lot of sense. Despite all the hype and 'fever', a millennium is a pretty irrelevant concept for all practical purposes. A century is a much more manageable chunk of time for us to look back over with celebration and look ahead to with anticipation. A century allows for three generations, the usual range of relationships in human families, but even the most devoted students of their family trees have no sense of family continuity over a thousand years.

The anticipation of another millennium might make a great excuse for a party but could itself cause us to overlook the more obvious and

ay

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meaningful challenge that comes at the start of any new century. What are the differences that we could and should be making in our world during the next hundred years? It would be very sad if we overlooked that more manageable question because of preoccupation with the exciting but shallow millennium idea. So, personally speaking, I don't mind at all that by being in Thailand millennium fever is largely passing us by unnoticed. Call me a party-pooper if you like, but when it comes to December 31 I don't want to focus primarily on it being the start of a new millennium. I shall as always welcome the opportunity to look back on the past year with thanksgiving and to look ahead to the new year with fresh dedication to God. And this year there will be an additional very special factor – I will be able to look back over the century that has passed and look ahead to the new century that is about to begin. That's more than enough for someone who expects to last about three score years and ten. lacktriangle

Geoff Bland is a BMS missionary involved in theological education in Bangkok, Thailand.

29

30



JOHN FURMAGE TALKS ABOUT SOME IMPORTANT DATES IN BRAZIL

t is rather weird that here in Brazil there does not seem to be too much excitement or even interest about the turn of the century. The date to watch here is 22 April 2000, and it is to this date that we have nightly countdowns on TV and elsewhere. On that day in the year 1500, Pedro Alves Cabral made the first European landing in Brazil, so the country is celebrating 500 years since its discovery. Cabral had set out from Portugal with 13 ships, 1,200 men and eight Franciscan monks in the hope of reaching India. They landed near Salvador, Brazil's first capital. In such a tropical paradise they boasted that God was a Brazilian, although such confidence has wavered recently. However if they are right, and God is a Brazilian, then perhaps everything could come together nicely

on 22 April 2000 if that day is also the date of the end of the world.

The paranoia about the Millennium Bug seems to have overshadowed most

Bug seems to have overshadowed most of the prophets of the end of the world in 2000. A number of dates for the

"Was Chernobyl a trial run for the end of the world 2000 scenario?"

second coming

of Christ are being offered by various Christian groups. 'INRI Cristo' our resident incarnation in Curitiba seems to be silent, but since he is already here, perhaps a suggestion on the end of the world might be more appropriate. The Y2K bug, from all the hype, is the apocalyptic agent to watch. One might expect that Brazil will be badly affected as banks, etc, computerised long before their British counterparts, but as they upgrade very rapidly here those

computers
and programs
that only used two
digits for the year are
probably all gone now.
Brazilians upgrade at a frenetic
rate; for example, the Income Tax
department accepted returns on floppy
disks last year and via the Internet as
well this year.

the test

There's also another problem that no one is talking about: year 2000 viruses. The virus Chernobyl, which hit on the anniversary of the disaster this year, is expected back via the Internet to destroy most modern computers minds and force you to buy a new motherboard. My nephew got it last month, but was fortunate; he only lost the contents of his hard drive. Was Chernobyl a trial run for the end of the world 2000 scenario? If I was a betting man I would put money on it. No wonder no one is talking about it: it is just too horrendous to contemplate, rather like the end of the world itself, except that this one will make a lot of people a lot of money in increased sales.

Having said that, some folks thought that the end had come in January when the long-awaited currency crash finally came. Over a few days the real plunged to less than half its value against the dollar. All sorts of high jinks and rumours helped it spiral out of control to such an extent that now it is slowly coming back to where it will probably stabilise at about 40 per cent of a devaluation or



when time stands

DELYTH WYN DAVIES RECALLS

nce upon a time - I was sent to what is now the Democratic Republic of Congo for an awareness visit. I had been warned that the concept of time there was entirely different to that I was used to, but experiencing it for myself brought quite a few surprises. Here are some extracts from my diary record:

Upoto - Sunday, 3 November. Boy, do they get up early here! At 4.30am I could hear a choir singing and it was still dark. It must be the keen ones having a prayer meeting I thought to myself. Then to my amazement I heard a church bell at 4.45am and again at ten minutes intervals. Suddenly there were many voices to be heard in the vicinity. People were obviously up and about at this early hour and judging by the noise level, were even being very sociable.

I'd been lying awake in my bed for some time and as I was so intrigued by all the activity, I decided to get up and watch what was going on. As day was dawning the fishermen were already in their pirogues gliding gracefully on the river and many people and children were carrying things on their heads around the village. Within a few minutes a group of men had gathered on the steps which lead into the church and I could hear singing and then a man speaking. It was only around 6.00am and two meetings of some kind had already taken place!

The first visitor of the day arrived soon after I had washed and changed. This was an experience that occurred quite often and one which I found really hard to understand. Who wants to entertain visitors before you've had time to wake up properly or have your breakfast?

Here in Upoto my visitor was on a

courtesy call. It was the Sunday school director who is also a pastor. He had come to escort me to the Sunday school which was to start at 7.30am. When we arrived, the classroom was full of children aged between two and 18.

After Sunday school finished and only four hours after waking up, it was now time for breakfast! Then I had to wait for the call to go to the main worship service. The church bell had been ringing since 8.30am and arriving at the church I saw a boy standing on the back pew pulling the rope for the bell. A choir was singing and we had a time of informal singing until the service started at 9.35am.

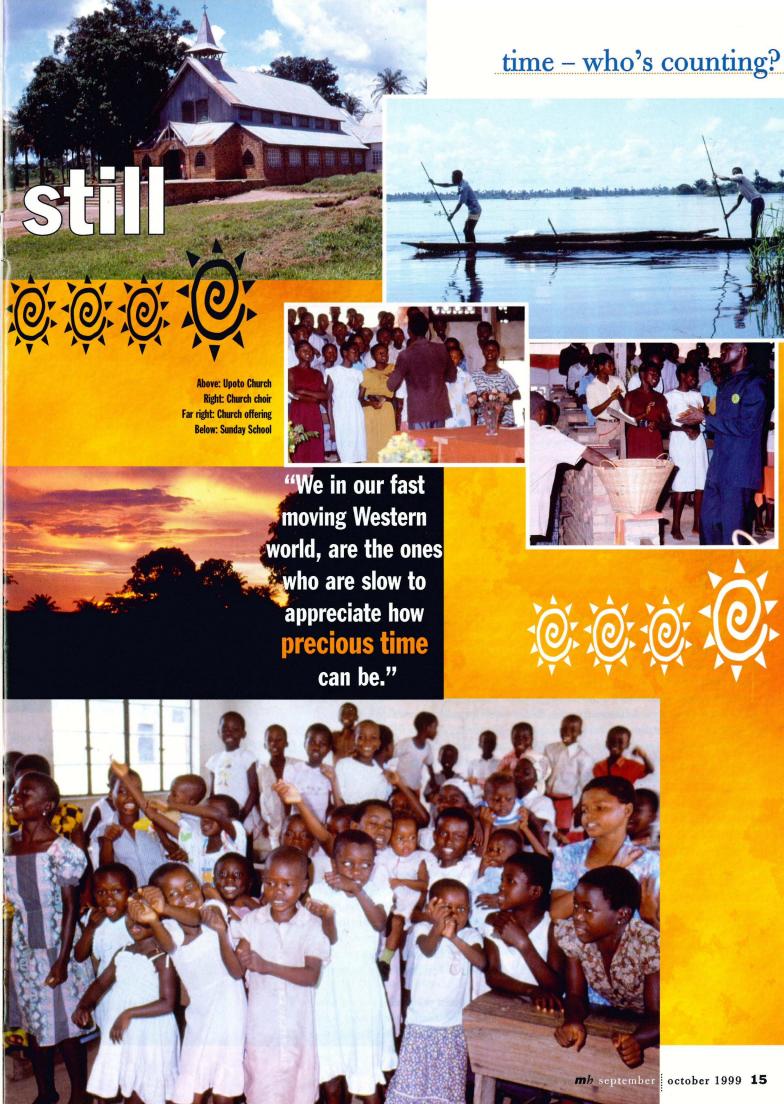
What a service - it lasted four hours and the communion part was still to come! I was amazed that I had not even noticed so much time had gone by. During the first part we had five choirs taking their turn to sing and it seemed that each choir had been determined to share a song that was longer than its predecessor! We then saw two babies dedicated, and visitors from other churches welcomed before the sermon. Between each of these items a choir would share a song. Then the fun started with the collection. As in the usual tradition each person was to come forward and place their gift in a basket at the front, guests first, then the children, then the men who were all sitting on the left hand side and lastly the women who were on the right hand side. This was done to the sound of lively African singing. Everyone was dancing and waving their arms and although it probably took an hour to happen, it was thoroughly enjoyable. Finally at 1.30pm the service finished and I was taken to the door to shake hands with everyone leaving the church. I discovered later that there

were 1,200 in the congregation, though I did not need a head count to tell me how clammy my hands were! Here people have time for each other, to shake hands with everyone or to visit a grave and spend time with those who are grieving. We, in our fast moving Western world, are the ones who are slow to appreciate how precious time can be.

After a brief break to wash our hands and have a cup of tea at home I returned to the church for the communion part of the service. The atmosphere was entirely different at communion with everyone in a solemn and quiet manner. Some time was spent in the act of receiving four members who had been excommunicated and following some thoughts on the parable of the lost sheep, the four were asked to kneel whilst the pastor prayed. The brief glimpse of him holding each one by hand and helping to lift them to their feet was a most powerful demonstration of God's love and reconciliation and will remain with me for a lifetime.

Lunch was served at 3.30pm and the rest of the day, what was left of it, was free for relaxation. Having rested for a while I went out to watch the sunset over the river. This was the first opportunity that I had to watch the very quick sunset that they have so near the equator. Soon it was dark and the sky seemed so vast, stretching endlessly in all directions and full of bright stars. This was a time to savour and an opportunity to be grateful for the privilege of spending time in a land where time often stands still.

Delyth Wyn Davies is BMS Co-ordinator for North and West Wales



evangelism

TONY CUPIT LOOKS AT EVANGELISM IN THE NEW MILLENNIUM

he 20th century is racing to a close and a new century is soon to begin. That in itself is momentous, but when coupled with the start of a millennium, it is big news.

The arrival of a new millennium is too big an occasion to ignore. The secular world will squeeze every possible marketing and publicity ounce from it. Politicians are beginning to position themselves for the fleeting glory of being in office at this significant moment in history. Travel companies will arrange for the affluent to see the first touch of sunlight as a millennial dawn touches the Pacific sky. New music to mark the transition will emerge, poems will be composed, entertainers will vie for prominence, as monstrous concerts will be staged before huge audiences. Some of this will be positive and wholesome, much of it will not. Indeed, the occasion offers the possibility of a huge Bacchanalian orgy of drunkenness, promiscuity and violence from a world whose ideas of celebration are too often marked by hedonism and licence.

How should the Christian Church react? What will we Baptists do to mark the moment? Should the Baptist World Alliance (BWA) take some

leadership in this? Certainly whatever is done must be with humility and an acknowledgement of how the Church has so often failed Christ and his people. But with all the theological, chronological and emotional hesitation we may have about the event, it is our good news to be shared with people everywhere. To leave the celebration to the non-Christian world would be to abrogate our responsibility as followers of Jesus Christ. It is hoped and anticipated that BWA member bodies will want to celebrate two millennia of the Christian era and be in the vanguard of acknowledging that a new century/ millennium recognises the birth of a Saviour 2,000 years ago. In general terms the BWA will be marking the end and beginning of a millennium in three ways:

- 1 Encouraging member bodies to engage in their own celebrations either at a point in time or over a period that straddles these anniversary events.
- 2 At a suitable time all BWA member bodies will be invited to be involved in a major evangelistic effort that is relevant to the circumstances of the country where the union or convention is placed. The BWA's **Division of Evangelism and Education is** seeking to bring leadership to this.
- 3 A Baptist world congress will convene in Melbourne, Australia in January 2000, a very appropriate time for Baptists from all

over the globe to bring our worship, love and praise to the Christ whose incarnation is the reason for the millennial celebrations and whose death and resurrection continues to offer hope to a needy world as the new era begins.

Tony Cupit is the Director of Evangelism and Education for the Baptist World Alliance

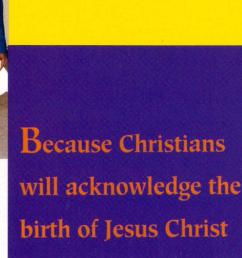
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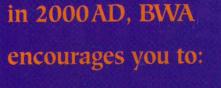
FOOTNOTE: The Baptist Union of Great Britain, Baptist Union of Scotland and Baptist Union of Wales are all members of the Baptist World Alliance. The Baptist World Alliance is a fellowship of 188 Baptist unions and conventions comprising a membership of about 42 million baptised believers.





Above & left: All Africa Baptist leaders



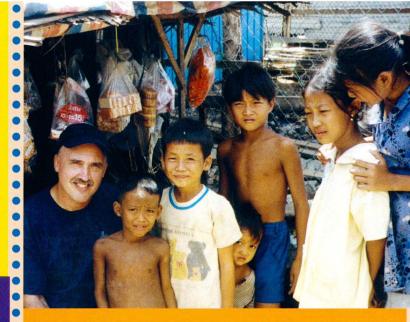


- Declare that He alone is Lord!
- Celebrate the coming millenium!
- Join with Christians everywhere in telling the world about our crucified and risen Savior.



Above: Latin American leaders Below: All Africa Baptist leaders Right: BWA poster





The millennium bandwagon rolls on STEVE FLASHMAN

A very famous chicken hit the headlines in the early 1800s when it laid an egg with the date 1809 printed on it! The owner, fortune teller Mary Bateman, persuaded a lot of people that this was a clear prediction of doomsday. Apparently the chicken had laid a whole series of eggs with various predictions printed on them and people were paying a lot of money to get their personalised egg message! It wasn't until someone interrupted Ms Bateman stuffing an egg up the rear end of this unfortunate chicken, that the fraud was exposed!

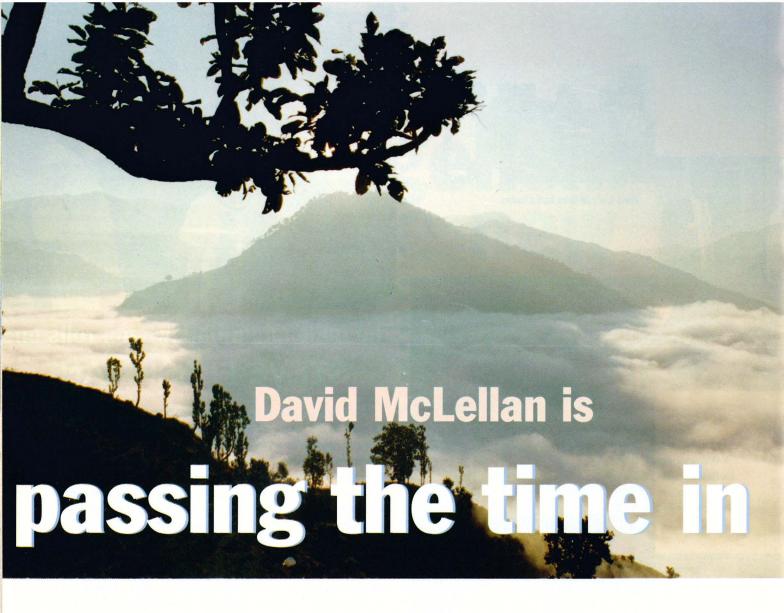
More recently Edgar Whisenaunt wrote a best selling book entitled, "88 Reasons Why the Rapture is in 1988". Not many people bought the sequel! And Marilyn Agee, a so-called 'expert' on Bible prophecy posted her prediction on the internet with the words, "We are running out of time to get right with God!" Her predicted date for the rapture – 31 May 1998.

Alongside all the talk about "doomsday", the advance of scientific discovery is unstoppable. With the impending advent of nanotechnology, where tiny computers can store one million trillion bytes of memory in one cubic millimetre and plans being made to land men on Mars, you would think that the millennium world would also bring advances in the areas of justice, peace and equality. The reality is that in the last 30 years the economic gap between rich and poor countries has doubled; wars in the last ten years have resulted in more children that soldiers being killed and disabled; and the £2.5 billion that the British spend on clothes every three months would more than pay off Africa's entire debt to Britain! The millions of underprivileged people in the Developing World are not concerned about how they will celebrate the millennium - most probably don't even know what the date is. And who cares anyway when your prime concern is how to feed your children today. Their lives hang in the balance in the precarious world in which they live, like a perpetual doomsday of epic proportions threatening to engulf everything around them.

The Christian Church has spread all over the planet and just like the billions of little lights that are picked up by satellite pictures of earth wherever there are people living, the light that we are called to bring must

shine. We have a tremendous opportunity as we approach the millennium to draw attention to the Jesus who said, "Therefore keep watch, because you do not know on what day your Lord will come."

Steve Flashman is a Baptist minister and International Director of Soapbox Expeditions



he Himalayan mountain kingdom of Nepal is either four and three quarter, or five and three quarter hours ahead of the UK, depending on the status of British Summer Time. Nepal has no seasonal time adjustment, and most Nepalis react with astonishment and disbelief to hear that every single clock in Britain is adjusted by an hour forwards, and then by an hour backwards at special days each year. When you stop to think about it, it is quite a social achievement for the UK!

Meanwhile, Nepal, sandwiched between its two powerful neighbours, India and China, jealously guards its distinct identity, by having a unique time zone.

Being a quarter of an hour ahead of India, it is quite common to see visitors who have come to Nepal from there, arrive for appointments 15 minutes late. With the somewhat more relaxed attitude to schedules in this part of Asia, it can be several days before the

"it is possible to celebrate at least four new years in any stretch of 365 days"

embarrassed visitor discovers the cause of their unintended impunctuality.

But as millennium fever sweeps the planet, there is more time variation in Nepal than just those measured by clocks. As you fly into Kathmandu, you may be told the local time, but the flight attendant will probably not have enough time to explain the date.

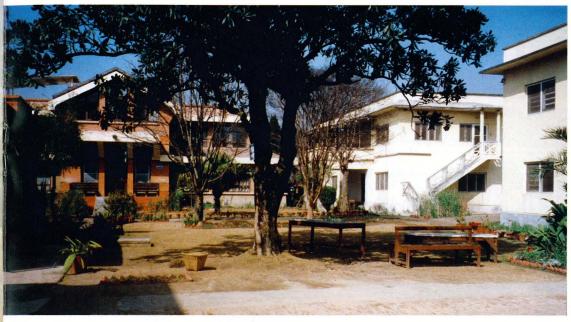
Nepal has a number of different calendars and it is possible to celebrate at least four new years in any stretch of 365 days. Some Nepali communities recognise the Chinese New Year in February, while the Newars, the dominant ethnic group of the Kathmandu Valley, mark their new year in November.

However, the two most commonly used systems are the standard Gregorian calendar, as used in Britain and many other countries, and the Vikram Sambat calendar. The top of a Nepali newspaper usually carries both dates: as I write, the Kathmandu Post declares it to be May 26, 1999, and Jestha 12, 2056.

What then is the fuss about a new millennium, when Nepal celebrated it, in mid-April, 56 years ago! The Vikram Sambat (VS) calendar originates from the date of the coronation of KingVikramaditya of Madhya Pradesh in India, who was reputedly responsible for a revival in Hinduism. As a Hindu kingdom, Nepal has retained the VS calendar, in contrast to its almost total decline in the more diverse states of India

In some ways the calendar is familiar to western eyes, having twelve months each with around 30 days, but the old adage of – 30 days hath September –

time – who's counting?





Left: UMN Headquarters

nepal



has no counterpart in Nepali, as the number of days in each month varies from year to year. So Jestha this year and last year had 31 days, but in 2054 and 2053 it had 32 days! Consider yourself fortunate if the only complexity in your year is whether February has 28 or 29 days - and that with a well defined rule. There are no easy rules for the VS months which vary from 29 to 32 days with no predetermined pattern. As an added complication, most months have two different names, so Jestha is also known as Jet.

The VS calendar is set by a group of Hindu astrologers who confer and define it around various 'auspicious' events. This includes setting the dates for the large number of Hindu festivals, many of which depend on the position of the moon. However, these dates are only announced a few months before the start of the new VS year, which can make forward planning a trifle difficult. Take, for example, the next year 2057 VS, which begins in mid-April 2000.

The dates for 2057 will not be known until I January or February 2000, so if you want to plan a year ahead using the VS calendar, you won't know the exact dates for another eight or nine months! Some departments of the United Mission to Nepal (UMN) design and publish calendars or diaries, in both Gregorian and VS formats, and often have to pay a fee to receive the dates sufficiently in advance to meet printing schedules.

In UMN, as in many other organisations in Nepal, both calendars are used. Staff are paid on the last day of the VS month, corresponding roughly to the middle of the Gregorian month and, for similar reasons, the UMN financial year runs from mid-July to mid-July. All of which means that the precise dates for paydays and even such a key event as the end of the financial year, are not clearly defined until between three and 15 months in advance. So, is that more complicated than adjusting all the nation's clocks by

an hour, twice a year?!

Why then, you may ask, does Nepal not get in step with the rest of the world? Is it such a big issue to be out of step – the rest of the world is not as well-defined as we often think. Culture in Nepal is different from culture in Birmingham, Boston and Baghdad, just as culture in those three cities varies one from the other.

Which is the standard for the others to follow? Certainly, those of us who are Christians would recognise Jesus Christ as the standard to follow in many areas of life, whatever our cultural background. At other times, however, it may

be sufficient to recognise, appreciate and even revel in cultural differences, without trying to make others step - in time - with us.

David McLellan was formerly UMN HQ Director and is now BMS Manager for Mission Partnerships based in Didcot, UK



A SERIES EDITED BY JAN KENDALL THAT LOOKS AT TOWNS AND CITIES AROUND THE WORLD WHERE BMS PERSONNEL ARE WORKING BY **KEVIN & LINDA DONAGHY** and **BARBARA & KEITH**

Background

HODGES

Strait of Gibraltar Gibraltar

As ancient explorers sailed up the Tejo River from the Atlantic Ocean, they reached a point about eight miles above the mouth where the river suddenly broadened into a lake. The northwest bank of this sheltered estuary became the site of Lisbon - Portugal's

capital as well as its largest city and port.

The city stands on seven hills around a small riverside plain. The climate is cool and wet from December through to February, but very warm in July and August. Evenings are chilled by ocean winds.

Lisbon is a city of distinct sections dating from different periods. The oldest part is the Alfama, the medieval quarter. Its narrow, cobbled streets and alleys wend steep, crooked paths up the slope of Lisbon's highest hill. At the top stands the ten-towered medieval castle of St George, Lisbon's oldest monument, parts of which date back to the fifth century.

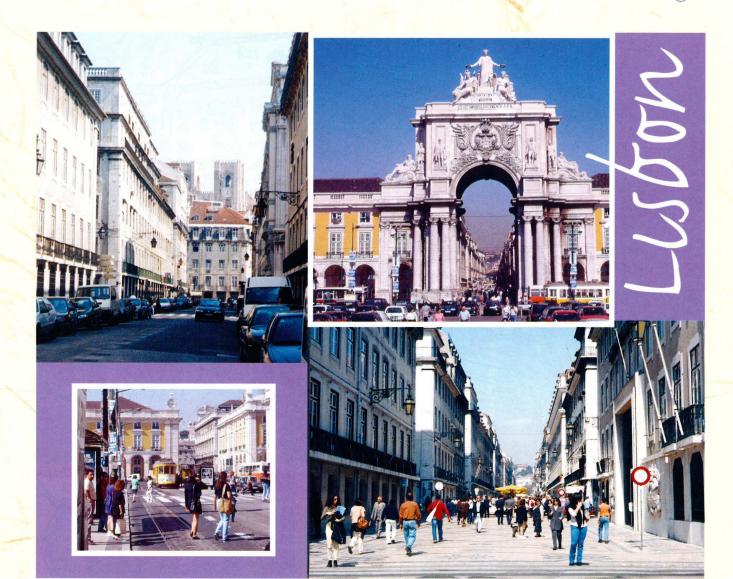
On another hill is the Bairro Alto, the high quarter, which dates from the 17th century. The streets are steep and narrow, but much straighter than those of the Alfama. The Bairro Alto is known for its craftspeople and its nightlife. This

is the commercial Baixa district, centred on the crowded cafés and neon lights of Rossio Square.

There tall modern office buildings tower above the fountains and cafés of the tree-lined Avenida da Liberdade; modern low-cost complexes have been build on the outskirts of the city.

First Impressions

- Traffic chaos, impossible parking, getting lost.
- A mixture of old and new old electric tram cars in some parts and very narrow streets together with new large shopping centres. (The Colombo Shopping Centre is on five floors!) Old bakery shops and Marks and Spencer!
- The centre of Lisbon is a hive of activity with shops, opera house, and cultural activities. Yet it has an olde worlde charm.



History

The Greek hero Ulysses is Lisbon's legendary founder. Archaeological evidence suggests that the site was occupied as early as 5000 BC and that a Phoenician trading settlement may have established there before the Romans occupied the site in 205 BC. The Romans built roads, walls and baths. The city fell to the Visigoths in the sixth century, and 200 years later the Visigothic city fell in turn to the Moors - Muslims from Northern Africa who entered Europe by way of Gibraltar. In 1147 the Moors were driven out by the king of Portugal, Afonso Henriques (1109-85). His successors recaptured Lisbon as their royal capital.

The 15th and 16th centuries were Portugal's golden age of exploration and discovery. During this time, Lisbon became the commercial centre for the Portuguese empire.

Disaster struck Lisbon on 1 November 1755, when an earthquake destroyed two-thirds of the city with extreme loss of life. The Baixa district was planned and built on the devastated plain at the city's centre. Another disaster struck the city in 1988, when a fire destroyed the historic Chiado shopping district, leaving 2,000 people without jobs and 300 homeless.

Politics

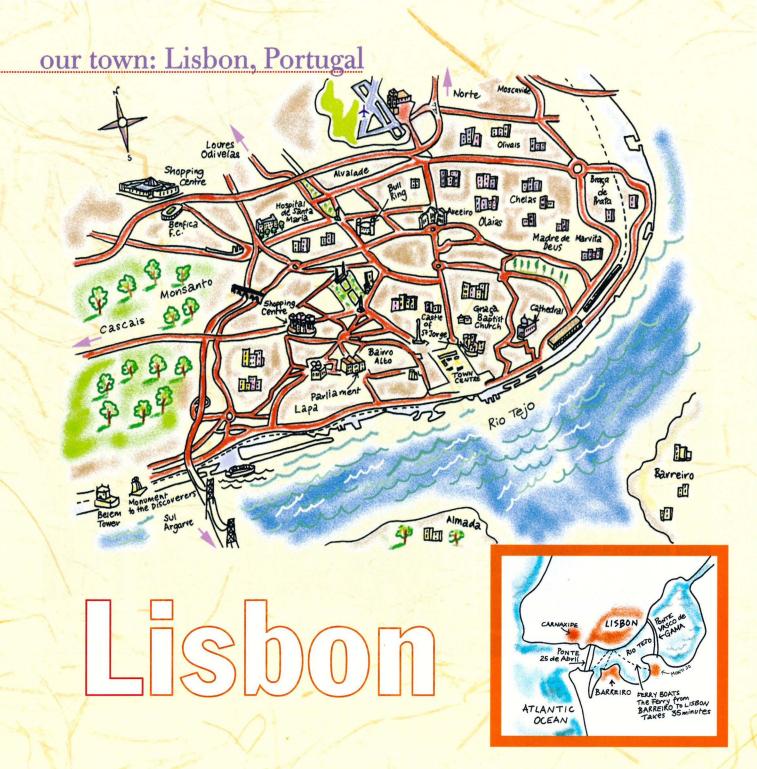
Portugal as a whole has just celebrated 25 years since the revolution, which brought down the Salazar regime,

which had been in power since 1932. Since 1974 when the revolution of Carnations occurred - so called because there was little bloodshed, and many of the soldiers who led the revolt were given red carnations to wear by members of the public - the government has been a Parliamentary democracy with a President.

People

In 1991 Lisbon's official population was given as 677,790, but the population of Greater Lisbon, including Carnaxide where the Hodges are based, would take it well over two million. The city of Barreiro where the Donaghys work, has a population of 50,000.

Carnaxide has Angolans,



Mozambicans and South Africans integrated into the society.

Economy

Lisbon's economic life centres around the harbour. Port wine and cork are characteristic exports, Industrial products include porcelain ceramics the city is noted for its distinctive tiles; expertly crafted leather goods and shoes; and copper ware. Industrial development is concentrated outside the city on the opposite bank of the Tejo. Barreiro is chiefly known for its chemical works and everyday large

amounts of - something - is seen pouring out of these factory chimneys. The Ponte 25 de Abril suspension bridge, and more recently the new bridge, Ponte Vasco de Gama, the longest bridge in Europe at about 11 miles in length, link the two sides of the river.

Religion

There are only three Baptist churches in the city of Lisbon, and some more in the satellite towns, but overall the Baptist church is still very small in relation to the population. In the whole

of Portugal there are only 62 Baptist churches with 4,379 members.

Barreiro

Kevin and Linda work in Barreiro, which is more and more becoming a suburb of Lisbon, although it has a completely different feel to it. The quickest way to get from Barreiro to Lisbon is the 35 minute ferry ride. The ferries run for 18 hours a day, and there's one every ten minutes at peak periods. There are also ferries from Lisbon to four other cities on the south bank, and the journey times take from ten to 50 minutes. In

our town: Lisbon, Portugal



the rush hour the river is very busy, and there have been a number of collisions between ferries. By car the journey takes 45 minutes, but you can get held up on the old bridge for as long as an hour and a half. Both bridges have tolls and the chances of finding a parking place in Lisbon are very slim. This year a rail link is being opened between the south bank and the centre of Lisbon. with the train line suspended under the old suspension bridge. House prices have risen. Five years ago a two bedroom apartment on the edge of Barreiro would have cost £40,000:

today it would be £80,000.

Barreiro and much of the south bank is communist by tradition; following the fall of the Salazar regime it returned communist council members and members of parliament, and they still do 25 years on. The communist regime is not a problem to the Church, but because the Catholic Church had such an influence during Salazar's reign, many people have washed their hands of all religion since the revolution.

Carnaxide

Carnaxide was originally a dormitory

town for those working in Lisbon, ten km away. It has very few houses, with most people living in a block of flats. It has three hypermarkets and its own indoor market.

Because of its growth, a lot of light industry has come into the town, especially the pharmaceutical industry, and cosmetic firms, There is very little poverty and everyone enjoys a reasonable standard of living.

Social life is at a low profile. There is no cinema and no theatre. But most travel to Lisbon for the zoo, the parks, the night-life and the eating places.

volunteers Right: View from Pokhara Below right: INF guest house compound, **Pokhara** Far right: INF headquarters (Three years old) Centre: Short term flat - First floor in Nepali house



ere we are back home in Derbyshire, in the old routine - or are we? After years of involvement in BMS work as a local missionary secretary our chance to 'do something' came as we approached retirement. Margaret, our daughter, had been seconded by BMS to the International Nepal Fellowship (INF) to work as a junior school teacher in Surkhet, west Nepal.

At Christmas 1995 we visited her in Nepal. Without realising it, the seeds were sown and on our return, we wondered whether there was anything for us to do there on a voluntary basis. We asked BMS that question.

INF were asked if they could use us. They replied that Brian could work fulltime at the headquarters in Pokhara and Wendy (an ex swimming teacher!) was asked if work in the busy guest house would appeal. The guest house manager, Marcelle Pilkinton, needed help in a number of ways - including having a regular day off! So, having been accepted by BMS and INF, we left the UK at the beginning of October 1998, with the aim of being in Nepal for six months. What a prospect!

Our arrangements went so well that we arrived in Pokhara only ten minutes late after two days of travel. We were met by BMS missionary Denise Clark and were taken to our new home - a

fully operational flat on the first floor of a Nepali home. We soon settled in and were able to begin work.

Brian was initially providing holiday cover for the recruitment officer. This was a busy position dealing with offers of long and medium term service from all over the world: medics, scientists, social workers, teachers, electives and so on. The hardest part was matching needs with offers and dates - quite a



jigsaw! Later he turned more to health and safety and did audits for different departments within INF - technical services, guest house and language school.

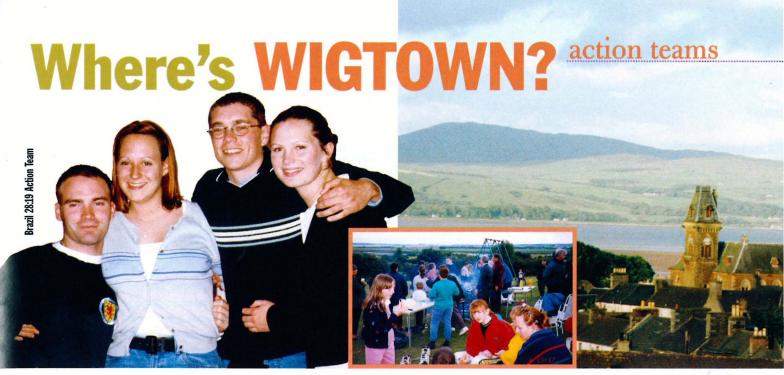
In the meantime, Wendy was trying to organise her life at home, alongside shopping in the bazaar and work in the guest house. There were regular guests and one-night stays in the eight double bedrooms. Lunches were served in the dining room each weekday for a further 40 to 50 staff from the headquarters next door. Lots to organise - shopping expeditions to town, bookings, bills, socials and so on.



conference in February. Although the majority of the staff are based in Pokhara, there are a good number working in remote villages or stations who rarely come into town. Everyone attended for the week of the conference and all the members resident in Pokhara offered accommodation. We now met everyone - how exciting it was matching photographs with the real thing!

Once we had become accustomed to life in Nepal, we became more and more at ease with it. Home, and thoughts of it, became less intrusive as we adjusted to our surroundings - the diet, the climate, and the company. Then the second half of our stay passed quickly and we were on the countdown to leaving our new life with its friends and colleagues.

How had we changed in the six months, we wonder? We can't put a finger on anything, but surely we can look at many situations through new eyes. Would we go back? Why not? It was a wonderful opportunity. We would recommend it to anyone with time to spare, be they 18 or 60. There is so much to be done - why not ask the Lord and then BMS?



EVERY YEAR THE
28:19 ACTION TEAMS
TOUR THE UK
SHARING THEIR
EXPERIENCES OF
WHAT GOD IS DOING
OVERSEAS.STEPHEN
MCGARVA REPORTS
ON ONE SUCH VISIT
TO HIS CHURCH.

igtown, Scotland's
National Booktown, is
in the extreme southwest of the country and
the Brazil Action Team
spent a week there in June.

The local Baptist church is small (33 members) but very active, and we chose to commemorate our 18th anniversary on mission with the team. We have a strong emphasis on youth ministry, and much of the team's time was spent with the young people of this rural

community. Even after the day's official programme was over, the mission continued amongst the teenagers, with the pool table and Playstation being used well into the night!

The team led three

assemblies and two class visits in the primary schools, and four assemblies in the local high school - this meant that every school-aged pupil in Wigtown heard about the love of God, not only for unknown people in Brazil, but also for us, here. The reaction from the primary children was great – singing and cheering and asking questions – and the reception from the high school students was amazing – not just listening politely, but with rapt attention, as four of their peers (almost) shared their own stories of God's work in their lives.

We invited the team to join us in our mission, rather than to do our mission for us and they participated enthusiastically in the various aspects of our ministry to all ages in the community: the children's club held an extra games evening with the team, and one night dozens of the children joined the adults at a barbecue.

Much of the success of the

team's visit came from

the fact that their

work built on what we were already

"God's name While there was love, and his was a particular face smiled, as the

talked to and played with the street children".

intensity of work that week, we wanted to avoid seeing mission as a load of special events and then the church returning to 'normal' – we are 'on mission' every week in the year! In the absence of traditional evangelistic rallies, someone questioned if we were really doing a mission, but they realised as the week went on that this was real mission – us going out, rather than expecting people to come in!

A few years ago there was a song in the charts which asked, "If God had a name, what would it be? If God had a face, what would it look like?" We realised that some of Brazil's street children and others got part of the answer when Mel, Becky, Fraser and Craig were with them for a short time. God's name was love, and his face smiled, as the team hugged and talked to and played with the street children. During the week, one or two of us

During the week, one or two of us sensed that this is the same mission God has given us in Wigtown, and we too need to play as full a part here as the Brazil Team did in Fortaleza.

Stephen McGarva is minister of Wigtown Baptist Church



TIME CATCH **PHRASE**

The answers to all these phrases have 'time' in them somewhere. See how many you can guess. (Answers page 27)

- 1 They've come through the progress of things affecting them.
- 2 An old man with a scythe and hourglass.
- 3 She did not use the hours available to her well.
- He was prematurely old.
- In his race, he beat what was expected of him.
- For ever.
- The conditions of life have altered.
- Until some other arrangement is made.
- 9 Serving a prison sentence.
- 10 Exchange a greeting or casual remark.
- 11 He did his apprenticeship.
- 12 Their hours of labour were curtailed.
- 13 Repeatedly; on many occasions.
- 14 When the person behind the bar tells you to go.
- 15 A period of exceptional enjoyment.

Women's Working Time (hours per week) **URBAN AREAS** Kenya Nepal DEVELOPING COUNTRIES Venezuela Indonesia Colombia 1112 RURAL AREAS Bangladesh Nepal Guatemala 1117 **Philippines** Kenya NDUSTRIALIZED COUNTRIES Finland **United States** Norway Netherlands France Austria Italy 100 105

TAKEN FROM THE WORLD GUIDE 1997/98, PUB INSTITUTO DEL TERCER MUNDO

What the Bible has to say about time

The Bible seems to be more concerned about the God-given contents of certain moments of history ('times' and 'seasons') rather than measuring the passing of time. God is very much in control, and the Bible stresses certain times - points at which God advances his purposes in the world.

God is not bound by time (Ps 90:2; 2 Pet 3:8) God was active before time began (1 Cor 2:7) God's sovereignty extends to an individual's life (Ps 31:15) First record of Jesus' preaching; 'The time has come' (Mk

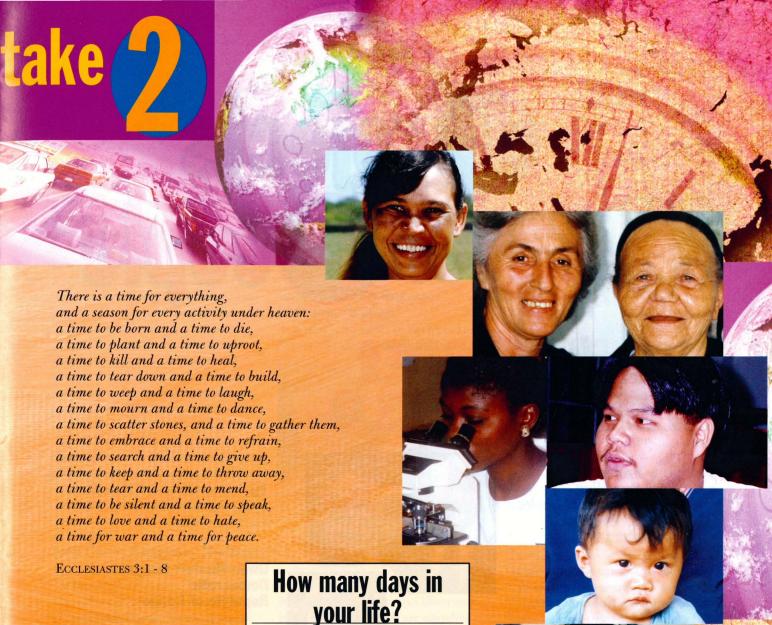
Jesus' ministry had key times appointed by God as

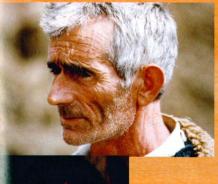
(Jn 7:6. Lk 19:44, Mt 26:18)

Signs of the end of the age, and of time

(Mt 24, 25; Mk 13; Lk 21)











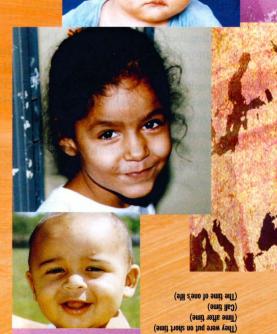
your life?

Highest life	expectancy	(years)

	O	, .,
1	Japan	80.0
2	Iceland	79.3
3	Canada	78.9
4	France	78.8
	Hong Kong	78.8
6	Switzerland	78.6
7	Sweden	78.5
8	Australia	78.3
	Italy	78.3
10) Greece	78.1
19	UK	77.1

Lowest life expectancy (years)			
1	Sierra Leone	37.5	
2	Malawi	40.7	
3	Uganda	41.4	
4	Rwanda	42.1	
5	Zambia	43.0	
6	Guinea-Bissau	43.8	
7	Afghanistan	45.5	
8	Burkino Faso	46.0	
9	Angola	46.5	
	Guinoa	46 5	

(POCKET WORLD IN FIGURES 1998)



(Pass the time of day) (Served his time) (Doing time) (For the time being) (Times have changed) (A lifetime) (Record time) (Before his time) (Wasting time) (Father Time)

(They have stood the test of time)

Answers

ects eople



Twenty four Angolan pastors, who have fled the war in that country, now live in Luanda, the capital. In escaping they have lost everything they owned, including their theological books. This BMS project is seeking to raise money to provide these pastors with three to four books each.

If you would like to know more about how you or your church could support a BMS project, please contact BMS projects administrator Ruth Berry on 01235 517700.





Jenny Smith. Nancy and Stanley Hornsby: Budapest, Hungary

> Readers of the May/June issue of **m**h will know that we were asking people to pray for another volunteer to join Jenny in teaching

English to students at the Baptist Theological College in Budapest. The Lord has answered and Stanley Hornsby will be heading out with his wife Nancy in September. Both have taught in Budapest before and were instrumental in Jenny first going to Hungary (she taught there in 1992 to 1995).

Please pray:

🚺 for Jenny and Stanley as they begin a new academic year and get to know new

n for the 'open house' evenings that

Jenny holds in her home. Pray they will be times of great support and encouragement 🚺 for Nancy as she seeks to renew and build friendships made when the couple were last in Hungary

Gwen Hunter: Kimpese, Democratic Republic of Congo

Finance and economy are always unstable in DRC with wages often not paid for months and inflation running wild. Recently

however the level of wages across the country was raised. Good news for employees - a manual worker now earns £15 per month and a qualified nurse £20, but a decision that could cause difficulties for employers. Gwen and her colleagues at the Evangelical Medical Institute (IME) wondered how they would pay the higher wages but the Lord provides in many ways and with two debts being paid to the hospital by other companies, they were able to



cover the amount needed. A gift from a generous benefactor in Kinshasa meant the hospital school was also able to meet their salary bill. This hospital and its training schools, supported by a number of different church communities, has an excellent reputation nationally and doctors from all over the country are sent there to complete their studies. Gwen, who has been in Zaire/DRC since 1968, has been heading up the pharmacy and schools at IME but comes to the end of her service in Congo in September and is looking to retirement in 2000.

Please pray:

for guidance as Gwen seeks the next step in her life and service. It cannot be easy to leave a country after so many years.

Judy Cook: Bangkok, Thailand

Judy began her first term of service with BMS in April by heading to Bangkok where she is learning to read and speak in the Thai language. A good grasp of the language is especially important for



Judy who will be working in the hills of Thailand with tribal women, teaching them about health care and sharing the love of Christ. Judy, a nurse from Birmingham, has visited her future workplace and says that she is, 'confident that this is the place of the Lord's calling for me'.

Please pray:

thank God that Judy has settled well in Bangkok, has made good friends and is enjoying her church life

🚺 for good progress in language

learning - the Thai script is particularly difficult

for guidance and for the right doors to open as Judy investigates opportunities for voluntary work, preferably with children, alongside her studies

Jean and John Rogers: Larnaca, Cyprus

Jean and John went out to Cyprus in May as Barnabas Project volunteers to



two years. Sat-7 sends out weekly Christian satellite TV programmes

to the Muslim world and the couple have settled into their jobs quickly -John as Chief Operations Officer and Jean as PA. The couple are attending Larnaca Community Church. As there is no current pastor, the services are led by church members and within weeks of their arrival, John was invited to preach his first sermon. Aside from the heat, the other main difference the couple have noticed is that Arabic music is written right to left meaning Jean has been playing piano music with the sheets turned backwards and a light bulb behind! She says it is easier than putting her brain into reverse!

Please pray:

Sat-7 employees come from many different countries, cultures and backgrounds.

for sensitivity and unity as they all work together for the gospel.

for good friendships to develop

that the intense heat will not prove too draining - August is the hottest month

Chris and Geoff Bland: Bangkok, Thailand



The new academic year at the Bangkok Institute of Theology (BIT) began in June with an exceptional number of students - over 50 accepted. A number of these are serving pastors who attend for two days a week to study a Masters degree, but the majority enrol for a four year degree course. Geoff teaches New Testament studies at BIT and is also writing several commentaries in Thai. One on John has already been published, and Acts will be published later on this year. With little theological material available in Thai, the books will be of great value to many theological students. Chris is involved in teaching English to the students so that they can access the many texts which are available in that language. The new Action Team which arrives in October for six months will help her in this work, befriending and working alongside the students to give them practice in speaking English.

Please pray:

for the building of good relationships with the new students

for Chris who now has twice the number of people to teach English - all of varying ability which makes the task even harder

that the new Action Team would settle quickly into the life of BIT, make good friends with the students and prove a great support to Geoff, Chris and the family.

prayer focus & people worldwide





Judith and Tony Sykes: Vellore, India

Judith and Tony have been in India since January 1997 during which time Tony, a civil engineer, has been working on a centenary building project at the Christian Medical College. The hospital has an excellent reputation and people travel thousands of miles for treatment there. They are now building a new centre for mothers and children and new residential tower blocks. The engineers Tony works with are Hindu with the occasional Muslim, but quite happy to work on a Christian hospital, and Tony has built good friendships with some of them. Judith works at ANBU Illam, a hostel for children with cerebral palsy. The home's aim is to help the children reach their full potential both physically and academically. Judith helps mainly in the vocational unit where children are taught craft and maintenance skills with a view to being able to go back to their homes to help support their families. She has been teaching them to use a sewing machine, do cross stitch and patchwork and in turn, the children have been teaching her Tamil!

Please pray:

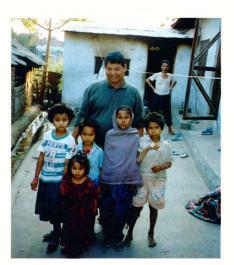
for continued health and strength for a time of rest and relaxation as they visit family in the UK in September

Expanding Prayer Focus. In this series BMS personnel introduce friends and acquaintances whom they meet from day to day

Kalpana Kathmandu, Nepal

Kalpana is eleven years old. Until February of this year she was acting as the mother and provider for her brother Shiva (aged nine), and two sisters Sita (five) and Sapana (two). Each day she would go round to the neighbours begging for food. Her father died two years ago of TB and alcohol abuse, and last year her mother ran off with another man, abandoning her children, because her new husband did not want them.

A concerned Hindu neighbour





started trying to find ways to help the small family, and then Suman, a pastor in one of the local churches, offered to take care of them. Suman and his wife now have official guardianship of all four children, and aim to bring them up in every way as their own. They have also adopted another little girl who had previously been abused. They want to give the children a chance to learn what it means to be brought up in a loving Christian home.

Kalpana has active TB, and is now on treatment, while Shiva and Sapana have latent TB, needing medication. All the children are gaining weight and learning to laugh and play again. At the beginning of March this year Kalpana smiled for the first time. She is getting a second chance at childhood.

Katrina Butterworth (BMS doctor working with UMN in Nepal)

Désiré Bombile **Democratic Republic of** Congo

(photograph above)

Désiré became a Christian at the age of 15 after listening to a sermon on Deut 30:15 'Today is a day to choose between life and death.' He began to teach in the Sunday school, and then to preach. Gradually he felt the call to study to be a pastor. This was in 1996.

His father had been fairly well-off, but his father and family had been part of president Mobutu's entourage, and had fled in 1997. After this Désiré found it difficult to support himself. Friends gave him help in money or



goods; someone bought him an electric powered mill so that he could grind people's cassava for them between studies, but the electricity in Kinshasa is very erratic.

When the Ugando-Rwandan alliance began a war against the DRC in July 1998, the authorities looked for Rwandans, assuming them to be the enemy. Désiré was tall and thin and was accused of being a Rwandan Tutsi several times. He was knocked about, shot at, and had his belongings rifled through. In the end a policeman took him and detained him for his own safety. In fact he spent most of the time between August and December in protective custody. He had been well looked after and had a TV set to watch as well as being able to read his Bible. But he says, 'I was deprived of my freedom.'

Désiré says: 'Everything that has happened to me is food for thought, study in God's school. It really happened. I didn't just read about it. I had no friend or relative to help, only the Lord. I was like Daniel in the lions' den with only God to save me.

John Mellor (BMS missionary in Congo)

Philippe Menten Bredene, Belgium

I was a happy child with parents who took good care of me. Around the age of 16 I began to search for something more; I knew the values that society prescribed

weren't enough for me. At 18 I began to experiment with drugs; got involved in 'underground' music, and took more



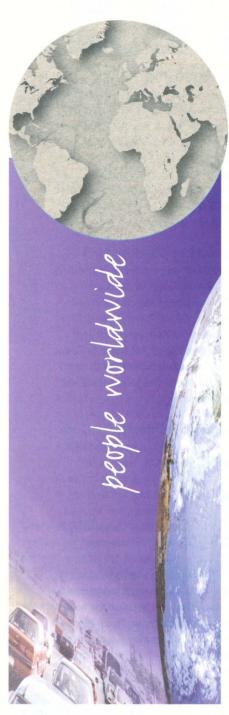
and more drugs from cocaine to heroin, from mushrooms to synthetic drugs, but I felt a spiritual emptiness. In 1989 my best friend whom I lived with died from an overdose of heroin. From then on my life went in a fast downward spiral, a kind of self destruction without knowing it. I began to drink a lot, had a lot of girlfriends for one night, and took a lot of drugs, not because I was addicted but because I couldn't find a meaning in life.

In that dark hole I met Carine (who is now my wife). She was a born-again Christian and told me about Jesus. At first I didn't want to know, but then we spent days and nights in discussion. God was pushing me in a corner: I decided to give my life to him. I went down on my knees and felt an indescribable warmth. I wept like a little boy who finds his mum and dad after being lost.

The Lord turned my life round. He's there! He's the meaning of life! I have become a fireman and an ambulance man, a husband and father, an artist and above all, a child of God.

I want to put on your hearts the people that society looks down on: the junkies, the hippies, punks, artists etc. A lot of the time they are looking for the 'real' things in life and can't find it in society or religion. Let's help them to find the real thing, Jesus!

Stuart Filby (BMS church worker in Belgium)





bms news



Baptist House News

Good News for the Trimble twins BMS workers in Nepal, Tim and Caroline Trimble, have heard from the UK Home Office that British citizenship has been approved for their Nepali twins Karuna and Samijhana. The official certificates should come through in time for a return to the UK for a family wedding.

New Executive Director for IAM Harri Lammi was unanimously appointed as **Executive Director elect at the Board** meeting of the IAM in May. Harri will succeed Bruce Gibbs of New Zealand in November, Harri, a Finn, is currently Operational Director of IAM based in Kabul. BMS works in partnership with IAM, and has recently accepted three people to work in South Central Asia.

Another first for Geoff



BMS missionary Geoff Bland, involved in theological education at the Bangkok Institute of Theology, has just had his third commentary in the Thai language published. It's a 200 plus page paperback on

the book of Acts. The series emphasises biblical exposition, and because the books have been written using the Thai Bible they are able to deal with textual issues that

would not even be mentioned in a commentary that was a translation from an **English book. Geoff's** previous commentaries have been on the **Synoptic Gospels and** John.



St Andrew's Hall: the baton changes hands

The BMS is on the threshold of ownership of the St Andrew's Hall Missionary College buildings in Birmingham.

A celebration was held on Saturday 3 July to mark the life and work of the college, and ended in the handover of the college Bible to BMS General Director Revd Dr Alistair Brown as a sign that the work will continue.

Before presenting the Bible to Dr Brown, the Revd Ernest Cruchley, President of the St Andrew's Hall Council, said he had verbal confirmation from the Charity Commissioners that the sale to BMS could go forward. Ownership transfer is expected to be completed on 31 August, and the hall will be renamed The BMS International Mission Centre.

The process of getting clearance for the £850,000 sale to BMS has lasted more than eight months. "It's been a long haul," said Dr Brown, "but the college

trustees and BMS were united in wanting the sale to happen, which is in line with the founders of the missionary college. With perseverance we seem to have got there."

St Andrew's Hall was formed by the 1966 merger of Carey Hall, dating back to 1912, with St Andrew's College, founded 1945. The buildings have been developed in several stages. In recent years St Andrew's Hall has been run under the guidance of three sponsors - BMS, the United Reformed Church and the Council for World Mission.

"We've been passed a baton to train people for world mission," said Dr Brown. "It's a major responsibility, but also a wonderful opportunity. We're determined to make the most of it."

The Revd David Kerrigan, BMS Director for Mission, said BMS would not rush to start its own courses. "Until now we haven't been sure we'd take ownership of the college, so our mission candidates are booked elsewhere for the next few months. That gives us time for decisions on building, staffing and curriculum issues. We can do much more than anything before, but we must prepare well."

Albania latest news

Sixteen volunteers left the relative security of their homes in the UK at the beginning of July, bound for Albania, to help with the Kosovan relief effort.

The 16 are all ages, and come from all walks of life; from nurse to café manageress, psychology student to plumber, woodworker to Baptist minister and secretary to counsellor. Their numbers also include Mary Parsons, a BMS midwife in Brazil who has temporarily relocated; the whole team is being led by Justine Horsfall, who has just come to the end of her time with the BMS Albania youth Action Team. Her knowledge of the country, its people and language will be invaluable.

The 16 have all given up between two and six months

of their time to work with BMS, based at four different centres in Albania.

BMS already has 16 long-term personnel working in Albania, and normally they would be engaged in such diverse work as engineering, nursing, church work, theological education and village agricultural projects. When the

refugees began to flood into Albania, these missionaries put their routine work to one side to concentrate on feeding, clothing and providing accommodation for those who had not been re-housed in refugee camps. Whilst having a roof over their heads, these people

missed out on official aid, and needed help in obtaining food and clothing

Although the missionaries did a sterling task, not surprisingly they could not keep up a sustained effort 24 hours-aday, seven days-a-week.

BMS appealed for volunteers to work alongside the missionaries, or to be engaged in other work which did not require a knowledge of Albanian, and was inundated with applications, and the result was this group being chosen.

BMS have been delighted with the response from people in the UK churches wanting to help in this refugee situation. Although the volunteers will initially work in Tirana, Durres and Bregu i Lumit, BMS are also assessing the feasibility of sending them directly into Kosovo.





1 PHILIP CHANT – WOODWORKER 2 JONATHAN HARRIS – STUDENT AT BIBLE COLLEGE 3 MATTHEW JAMES – PSYCHOLOGY STUDENT 4 SUSAN CADDY – STAFF NURSE 5 BRIAN TAYLOR – PLUMBER, WELDER AND HEATING ENGINEER 6 JOHN MASSINK – BAPTIST MINISTER 7 SUSAN BUCKLEY – MANAGERESS OF CAFÉ/SHOP 8 ROD BRADLEY – SUPPORT OFFICER WITH LEA 9 DEE WINFIELD HEALTH CARE ASSISTANT 10 JANICE TAYLOR – HELPER AT DROP IN CENTRE 11 DEBBIE PEARSON – SECRETARY 12 SARAH BLACKMAN – JUST COMPLETED A LEVELS 13 ZOE RANSON – CARE ASSISTANT 14 ROSEMARY FOX – COUNSELLOR 15 MARY PARSONS – MIDWIFE

WITH BMS IN BRAZIL INSET: JUSTINE HORSFALL - TEAM LEADER

oms news

Two new appointments for ACT



Gordon McBain having completed six months Arabic studies in the southern coastal city of Sfax, has moved with Ann his wife and four children, to Tunis, where he has taken up the post of Personnel Director of ACT. Gordon is the first person to hold this new post and he strengthens the existing HQ team of General Secretary and Finance Director.

John Passmore, BMS Regional Secretary for North Africa and Asia was elected President at the ACT Board meetings in April. John has been the BMS representative on the Board for the last three years and vice President since 1997.

ACT is an international Christian organisation, set up in 1982, to co-operate with the government of Tunisia to meet the needs of marginalised groups. There are currently 11 member bodies making up the **ACT Board.**

Check Out

September/October 1999 September

Arrivals

Gwen Hunter from Kimpese, Congo

Departures

David and Sue Jackson to Colombo, Sri Lanka Georgie Christine to São Paulo, Brazil Barbara and Keith Hodges to Carnaxide, Portugal Cath and David Meikle to São Paulo, Brazil Nicola and Roger Pearce to Tirana, Albania

October

Arrivals

Colin and Denise Clark from Pokhara, Nepal David and Yvonne Wheeler from Tirana, Albania Rosimar and Tim Deller from Goiânia, Brazil Derek Punchard from Curitiba, Brazil

Departures

world mission link

world









Downton climbs up

Downton Baptist Church in Wiltshire are keen to raise mission awareness. In the past they have supported projects in Ethiopia, Mali, Albania, Peru, Brazil, and Guatemala. This year they are stimulating interest and raising money to support Tlana and Madini Hnamler, Mizo missionaries working for BMS on a sanitation project in Taplejung, Nepal.

They have put together a collage of a mountain side with a water pipe coming up the mountain, and shaded in the progress of their fund raising. They have committed themselves to raising £5,000, and so far are nearly halfway there.





Over 250 people gathered in the garden of Jim and Eileen Clarke for the fourth 'Open Garden' event to be held in the last seven years. Jim was, until the beginning of the year, BMS Co-ordinator for Central and Eastern England; over 70 churches were represented from all eight counties of his former 'patch'.

In spite of a thunderstorm the night before, resulting in a loss of power from 3.00am until just before 1.00pm, at least 200 lunches were served. ("Don't ask me how with no power," said Jim.) There was a range of stalls, and BMS missionaries Ryder and Heather Rogers were present throughout the day, sharing the latest news on the Albania/Kosovo situation. Altogether £1,300 was raised for BMS, and the event was declared "The best to date!"

CHALK and

Over 150 people were present for the Saturday evening presentation at Chard Baptist Church, Somerset, of the recently returned Nepal Action Team. The Team had been at the church all week, had visited four schools and participated in meetings across the age spectrum.

The Nepal Action Team had been invited to this area by the 'cluster' called CHALK, that is, the Baptist churches of Chard, Honiton, Lyme Regis and Kilmington. The group came together three years ago to work more effectively in a number of mission activities, including support for BMS. In July, CHALK invited their new BMS link Kitty Brett to spend a day with them before leaving for Asia in August.

Chard minister and BMS General Committee member, Peter Morgan said "I am thrilled with the heightened awareness and involvement in overseas mission, and BMS in particular, which has developed in our churches here in the last three years."



Photographs:

Top: Tlana and Madini Hnamler, Nepal; Above: Jim & Eileen Clarke's Garden Party Left: Kitty Brett, CHALK link; Below: 98/99 Nepal Action Team with Phil Hindle, BMS Co-ordinator for the South and West and Peter Morgan.



Vinoth Ramachandra

Tolerance or indifference?

What does it mean to work towards a tolerant society? Built into the very notion of tolerance is the assumption of disagreement. Voltaire summed it up admirably: "I disagree with what you say, but I will defend with my life your right to say it". Therefore, contrary to the popular view, those who believe that "all religions are essentially saying the same thing" or that "all sexual lifestyles are morally valid", are not practising tolerance. The acid test of our tolerance is when we are faced with beliefs, practices and values which radically challenge our own. It is only when there is fundamental disagreement that our willingness to truly respect the "other" is revealed.

Imagine two people, Mr A and Miss B. Mr A prides himself on his tolerant attitudes. He is an agnostic when it comes to religious beliefs, but thinks that if there is a God then surely all peoples will ultimately be "saved". He ridicules attempts to convert people, and the idea of divine judgment. His attitude to life is one of benign non-interference in others' lives, since what we believe or disbelieve does not ultimately matter.

Miss B believes that what people believe about God does make both a decisive difference to the way they live now, and also to their eternal destiny. She agonises over the thought of people like Mr A facing divine judgement for their wilful rejection of the gospel. She prays earnestly for them. Yet she refuses to use coercion or manipulation in persuading people to respond to the gospel. She believes passionately that homosexual practices are sinful, yet equally passionately defends homosexuals from discrimination and persecution. For her tolerance is not easy; it is something to be worked at. Which of these two positions is more morally admirable?

Vinoth Ramachandra is South Asia Regional Secretary of IFE





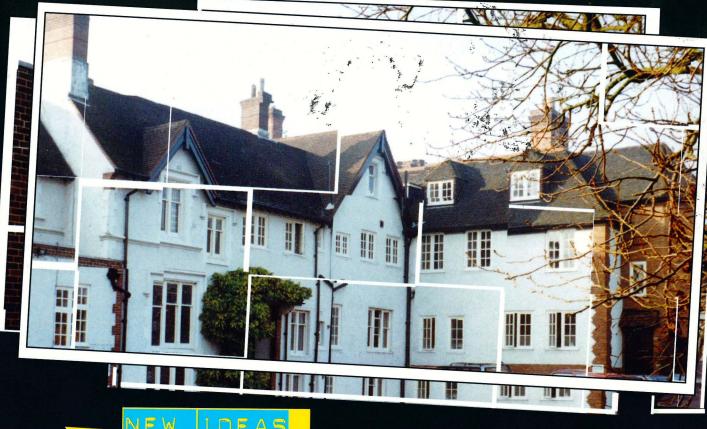
"If not here, where? If not now, when? If not you, who?"



CARTOON BY DIK LAPINE

POSSIBILITIES









OPPORTUNITIES NEW

St Andrews Hall becomes...

BMS International Mission Centre

From being partners in St Andrews Hall, we have now purchased and renamed it the BMS International Mission Centre, aiming to equip a new and growing generation of mission workers. We believe that IMC can be a key training centre for new missionaries, and a resource for people from other nations, for existing mission personnel and for the Church in this country.

We are seeking a Director for IMC, and a Manager for Mission Training, both based in Birmingham. If either of these could be you, please contact Alistair Brown (General Director) or David Kerrigan (Director for Mission) for an informal chat. Full advertisements can be found in Christianity magazine or recent editions of the Baptist Times. Alternatively contact Mike Quantick, (Administration Manager), and full details will be sent to you. E-mails can be sent to mail@bms.org.uk





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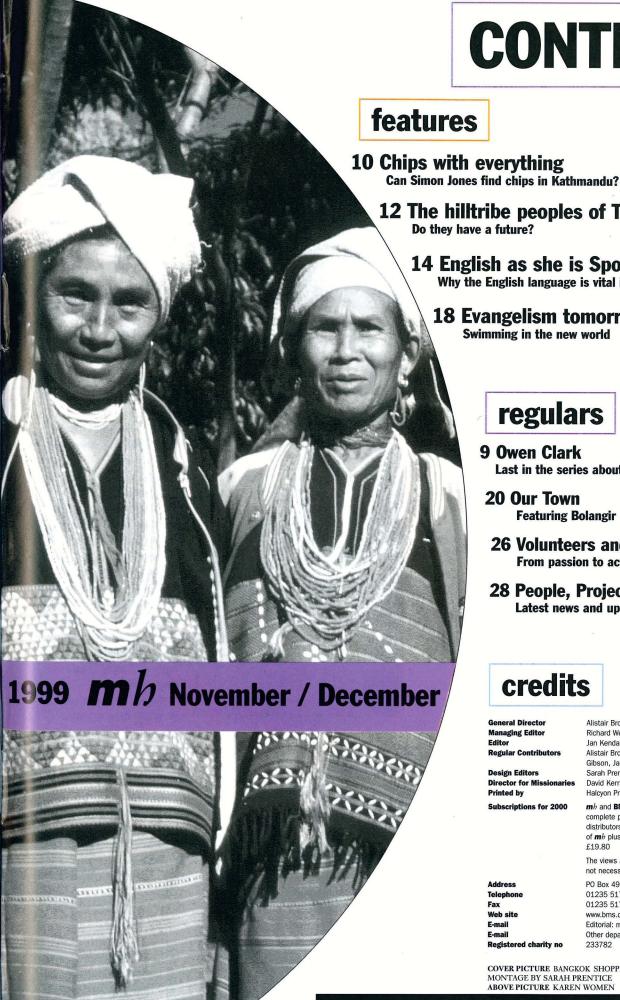
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credits

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COVER PICTURE BANGKOK SHOPPING CENTRE/KAREN WOMEN MONTAGE BY SARAH PRENTICE ABOVE PICTURE KAREN WOMEN

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world news

hat would you like for Christmas? New clothes, CD player, PC? Or something less materialistic like peace on earth?

The world is accumulating more and more consumer goods: there are 2,122 radios per 1,000 people in the USA; two people for every main telephone line in the UK; 23 per cent of households with dishwashers in Slovenia – that's higher than the UK – and 71 per cent of households with microwaves in Finland.

Third World countries are emulating this, and although their consumer goods ownership figures are nothing like as high as the West's, they are climbing up. That's why you can't get away from personal computers, satellite dishes, luxury fourwheel drive vehicles or designer clothes wherever you are in the world - be it Far Eastern city, desert tent or tribal hut. This issue of mh is looking at the effect of globalisation on mission. That is, how technological and societal changes have impacted the whole world. As Simon Jones points out in his article 'Chips with Everything', you're just as likely to watch Arsenal in a Thai village as in your own living room. It's also looking at how the world is fragmenting and reaffirming its tribal, sectarian roots in a desperate effort to count, to belong, to matter. These shifts in what is happening beyond us and within our own domain affect the way we do things. These particular changes cause us to reevaluate the way we do mission. And as well as being reactive, we need to be proactive in setting the pace, and reading the signs of the times.

Who better than Christians to tell people of the all encompassing knowledge and love of God, not just in a wishy-washy sense, but specifically? Everyone matters in the schemes of God; everyone has their place and purpose and can have a relationship with their Creator because of what Jesus did for us, while we were still alienated from him, by his dying and resurrection. That truth doesn't change, though just about everything else might in the next 20 years! With best wishes to you as we come to the end of this millennium.

Looking forward to your partnership in the gospel as we enter the next one!

Jan



World



is what God Almighty has ordained for me and for my beloved country..."

NIGERIA

So began the inauguration speech of Olusegun Obasanjo, the new President of Nigeria, who sees himself as a man on a mission to win back the heart and soul of a broken country. He is a devout Christian, and in his augural speech mentioned "God Almighty" eight times. The task ahead of Obasanjo is enormous, and many commentators

have remarked that he is going to need all the help he can get, from whatever source.

Obasanjo was elected President following the sudden and unexpected death of General Abdulsalam Abubakar, appointed by the military junta in June 1998.

In his first week as
President, Obasanjo
suspended all the contracts
signed by the Abubakar
regime between 1 January
and 28 May and appointed a
seven-member panel headed
up by Dr Christopher

Nigeria New President is man on a mission

"Fellow Nigerians, everything created by God has its destiny, and it is the destiny of all of us to see this day. You the good people of Nigeria elected me, as your President, to head the democratic civilian administration. I believe this

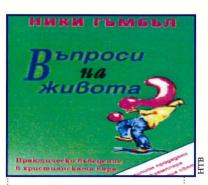
news

Kolade, an astute Christian and ex-chairman of Cadbury, Nigeria to review the suspended contracts. He appointed a human rights committee to investigate abuses, and has established a panel to investigate persecution of Christians from 1983 to the present. He retired the heads of the central bank, and police, and in his second week he retired 100 top military officers who had held political appointments between 1985 and 1999.

Obasanjo also plans to return mission schools to the churches, a move that has generated Muslim opposition, with Muslims fearing their children will be denied access to the schools. The Christians have said, in reply, that they have an open-admission policy. Revd S Ola Fadeji, the General Secretary of the Nigerian Baptist Convention, has been quoted as saying, "The **Baptist Church** wholeheartedly accepts the decision and is fully prepared to take over the schools." (New African/BWA)

Russia Alpha just beginning

The Alpha course is now operating in 60 countries worldwide, among them Russia. Courses are currently operating in 40 towns



in Russia, including Smolensk, Tver, Nizhny, Novgorod, Tula, Krasnoyarsk and Rostov-on-Don. In Tver alone, the coordinator of Alpha in Russia, Marina Savilyeva reported that there were 13 Alpha groups, including one composed entirely of teenagers, while in Moscow the course was even spreading among the higher ranks of the army. There is also a course running within the British Embassy. It is believed that there are about 80 Alpha courses running in Russia altogether.

Unlike Britain, where the course has been taken up by a variety of denominations, in Russia Alpha appears to have

been adopted

almost exclusively



Kuwait

Amanuel Ghareeb, the first Kuwaiti to enter the full-time Christian ministry, according to United Bible Societies, has been ordained as pastor of the National Evangelical Church in Kuwait City, Kuwait. The new pastor had been involved in the oil business for 25 years, and underwent his theological training in Cairo, Egypt. He is one of an estimated 250 indigenous believers in Kuwait, a predominantly Muslim country. (EBPS)

Kosovo

In response to an e-mail bombardment from its employees as to how the world's largest information supplier was going to help the Kosovan refugees, Microsoft gave both staff and technology to set up a database of the 800,000 people that were being dealt with by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. Refugees were registered on the database, given identity documents and matched with members of their families and communities in other – possibly distant – camps. (B Collett)

Lebanon

The Bible Society in Lebanon has dedicated a new centre in Beirut, designed to meet the needs of the Middle East area. Eighteen athletes undertook a triathlon to celebrate its opening. They began with a run near the oldest inhabited city in the world, Byblos, from which the world 'Bible' came; then swam a course in the Mediterranean Sea and finished with a cycle ride to the Centre. (EBPS)

Cuba

An American Christian leader asked thousands of Cuban Protestants to pardon the US people for their government's embargo against the island nation. "For people of faith there are no embargoes" said Revd Joan Brown Campbell, Secretary General of the National Council of Churches of Christ in the USA. "We ask you to forgive the suffering that has come to you by the actions of the United States." (LAP)

Namibia

A new political party - the Christian Movement Namibia Action Party - was recently launched in the country's capital, Windhoek. Jeremy Kasume, its president and founder said the party's goal was to transform the country's political, social and spiritual landscape. Kasume said Namibia needed leaders who were accountable to God and bound by the Bible and the national constitution. (New African) by charismatic churches. However there are pockets where this is not true. The Catholics originally thought Alpha was not for them but have gradually discovered its value. The real desire by those who wish to see Alpha grow in Russia is for it to be adopted by the Russian Orthodox Church. Robert Minney, advisor on religious education in the Department of Education of the Moscow Patriarchate thought the main objection from the Orthodox point of view was that "a sense of sacred time and sacred space is totally absent."

Alpha is the product of Holy Trinity Brompton (HTB) Anglican church in London, and was first introduced into Russia in 1994 by a member of HTB, Roland Dunford-Slater, who was working as an independent missionary in Yoshkar-Ola. (Keston)

Hong Kong Noah's Ark to be part of theme park



A biblically-based Noah's Ark containing a creation science museum will be part of a unique theme park on Ma Wan island in Hong Kong harbour.

The project is being funded by the largest

property development company in Hong Kong, and a team of Christian experts on theme parks and World Expositions have been brought together to develop the proposal. The expected date for opening is April 2002.

Stage one of the project will be a 55,000 square foot garden called the "Heavenly Blessings Garden". It will be a quiet, meditative garden, displaying biblically-based arts and sculptures, encouraging thoughtful reflection and fellowship with God.

Next will come Noah's Ark, which will be partially buried in rocks and sediment. Inside the Ark will be the creation science museum, a Bible theme restaurant, an experiential theatre and other multipurpose function halls. There will also be an aquatic research centre, an archaeological museum and a solar observatory.

When the developer's advisors and consultants heard about the Noah's Ark proposal from the Christian team, the master planner, who himself is not a believer, said he would approve the proposal if the Christians would adhere to three conditions: 1) to preach the gospel; 2) to base everything on the Bible and 3) to make sure that everyone who visits the park will have a shout in their heart which says "Praise the Lord".

Dr David Wang, leader of Asian Outreach and Executive Director for this project said he felt a clear sense of being "mandated from heaven."

On being asked as to why a successful developer in ultra-materialistic Hong Kong would want to do a project like this, Dr Wang replied, "There was a significant amount of intensive praying by Christians – both locally and from around the world – prior to Hong Kong's 1997 take-over. God has a habit of answering prayers in unique ways."

Disneyland is also being planned for Hong Kong on a neighbouring island. "Now that our neighbours are Mickey Mouse and Donald Duck, our anticipated attendance has grown tremendously," said Dr Wang. "At first we thought it would be two million visitors a year. Now it could be three times higher." (Assist)

Bulgaria Concern over new law

All the leading minority faiths in Bulgaria including the Evangelical Alliance, which is made up of Pentecostals, Methodists, the Church of God, Baptists and Congregationalists have expressed concern over aspects of a proposed draft law on religion that has been put forward by two parliamentary deputies of the ruling coalition.

They have also criticised the speed at which the draft was rushed through, allowing only one week for comments and feedback.

The main concerns are:
1) that religious groups will remain under the supervision of the executive power. Groups which, officially are not allowed to exist are subject to heavy fines. 2) Only one religious system is allowed per system





of belief. This means, for example, that it would not be possible to establish a second Baptist Church in the country, if so desired, because such a church was already established. 3) Local authorities will take on new tasks, which could have repercussions on local religious groups if local rules are deemed to have been violated. 4) Although the draft says that all religious institutions are equal, the Orthodox Church has been given special preferences, and 5) it will be impossible for new religious groups to enter the country and conduct activities.

Emil Cohen, who heads up the Tolerance Foundation, a religious liberty group, based in Sofia, the capital of Bulgaria, is concerned about the outcome of these draft proposals. "The speed under which discussion of the draft is proceeding provokes anxiety among a lot of the leaders of minority religious groups as well as among human rights activists. This draft shows us that although the present administration has done a lot to improve the situation over religious human rights in Bulgaria, the desire of the State to dominate religious groups is still alive." (Keston)

Myanmar

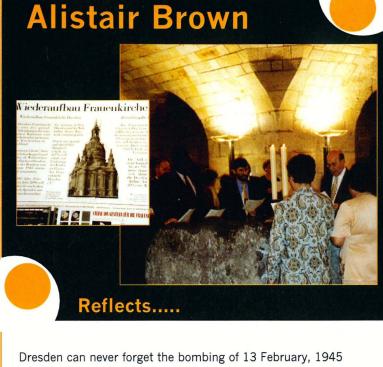
Terror squads use new tactics

New atrocities have been waged against the Karen people, many of whom are

Myanmar (Burma).

A special military intelligence unit called the Sa Sa Sa has been set up, claiming a licence to kill ten villagers a month. Members underwent special indoctrination and training and came under the direct control of General Khin Nyunt, the first secretary of Myanmar's military junta. Their aim: to clamp down on the pro-democracy movement. Operating in groups of up to seven, they entered villages, ordering villagers to kill their dogs. If the villagers refused, they shot the dogs themselves and charged the villagers for the bullets. This was to allow the terrorists to operate at night, undetected

relocation camp, killed them and after beheading them, displayed their heads at the entrance to the



Dresden can never forget the bombing of 13 February, 1945 which reduced much of the city to rubble. Thousands perished in the fire storm. Photos from the time show survivors heaping corpses in large mounds among ruins no longer recognisable as buildings.

Among the devastated buildings was the Frauenkirche (Church of our Lady), one of the most inspired works of European architecture. Its 95 metre dome – a 'bell of stone' – was awesome. Massive and magnificent, the church had towered over the city for 200 years. Then came 1945. Nothing but a few stumps survived the bombing.

Now it's being rebuilt in time for Dresden's 800th anniversary celebrations in 2006. More than the rebuilding of rubble is happening. At a recent Baptist World Alliance gathering people from many nations met to worship in the crypt, the one part of the Frauenkirche already useable. We sang; we prayed; we listened to God's word.

And people who might have been enemies, coming from some of the world's worst war-torn nations, stood in a circle at the front and pledged their oneness in Christ – from Croatia, Rwanda, Serbia, Albania, Germany, Liberia, Indonesia.

The pain of what all of us have done to our own countrymen and others wounded our hearts. Yet the reconciliation of the gospel was wonderful. Nothing the evils of this world has done has destroyed the family of God, sister and brother standing shoulder to shoulder pledging peace, love and forgiveness. May God's peace be the inheritance of our children.

Alistair Brown is General Director of BMS





world news

village, forcing everyone to look at them. Other atrocities include abduction, the burning of villages with families still in their homes, extortion of money, stealing food, forcing villagers to act as unpaid porters, and forcing Christian villagers to pay for the construction of Buddhist temples, with the fear that once they are completed, the villagers will be forced to worship there.

There are around seven million Karen people in this area, 40 per cent of whom are Christians. (CSI)

Germany Have the wells run dry?





Dresden, capital of the German State of Saxony, recently hosted a General Council where world Baptist leaders reported on many and diverse aspects of ministry.

For German Baptists the meeting was most welcome, and attention was drawn to

the huge physical and spiritual needs in Europe.

"Here, where the great reformer Martin Luther brought us the Bible in our own language, we are living in a Christian museum," said Eckhard Schaefer, General Secretary of the Union of Evangelical Free Churches in Germany. "We need an infusion of the Holy Spirit." He appealed to those present: "Dear brothers and sisters from the Third World, to whom we sent the gospel, please bring us the spreading fire of the Holy Spirit. We need to learn evangelism is not an option but a necessity."

Schaefer continued: "In Germany and other countries of the West, we have stopped scooping water from the life-giving well. Instead we have made our own wells which are dry. Men and women demand security, peace, hope and meaning in life, but how is it possible to find these things without God?"

Theo Lehmann, pastor and youth evangelist during the communist period,



said the former East Germany had lost something with freedom. Ten years after the fall of Communism, he said, most people "have forgotten what it is like and are unthankful." (BWA)



Burmese Border Refugees

The photograph for this month shows a group of Burmese children. So many children and their mothers and fathers live a very precarious existence in Burma (Myanmar), and many live under such fear and harassment that they are forced to flee from their homes. This is especially true of the ethnic minority groups who live close to the border with Thailand - groups such as the Karen, Karenni and Shan.

The Burmese army has forced these people to do unpaid labour and to leave their traditional lands. People who are forcibly removed from their villages in this way are supposed to reestablish themselves within tightly controlled fenced communities inside army-held territory. There is not shelter or any other facility provided at the new location. Meanwhile, everything in their village is ruined, houses are burned down, livestock killed and crops destroyed. It is not surprising therefore, that many people from this area flee across the border into Thailand, although that itself is a very dangerous step to take.

The Burma Border Consortium (BBC) is an independent Christianbased organisation. It operates a refugee relief programme for displaced people resident in camps along the Thai/Burma border. The refugee population in Thailand is well over one million and the BBC provides assistance to some people outside the camps as well as those within camps. The BBC has a philosophy of maximising refugee input and minimising aid dependency as much as possible in the situation.

Please write a message of encouragement to:

The Director

Burmese Border Consortium

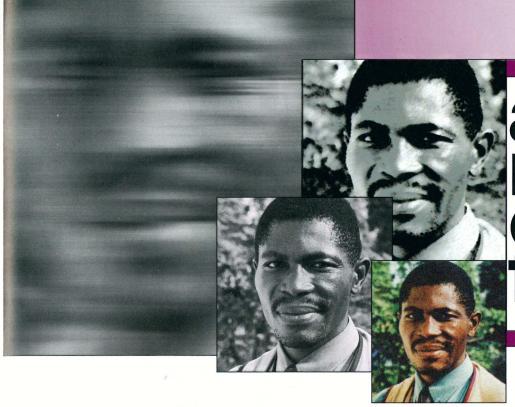
125 Convent Road

Siloam

Bangkok 10500

Thailand

BMS, Baptist Union, Christians Aware, Church of Scotland, Methodist Church, United Reformed Church.



a man of faith

john lihamba

OWEN CLARK

CONCLUDES HIS
SERIES ON PRESENT
AND FUTURE
CHURCH LEADERSHIP IN THE
DEMOCRATIC
REPUBLIC OF
CONGO (FORMERLY
ZAIRE)

ho did the new baby take after John wondered. Himself or his wife? In August 1998 he had left Lingungu for six months' development studies in Cameroon and should have been back for the birth, but the rebellion in Eastern Congo had split the country. Back in Kinshasa he only got occasional news by radio of Aline and the children, now in Kisangani.

August again, and he was on his way home, albeit via Nairobi and Kampala, eager to see his family, including the newcomer. Alas, at Kampala, his hopes were abruptly squashed. Flights into Kisangani were off due to fighting between rival rebel groups.

Fortunately, John is a man of faith. He'd learnt to discern the hand of God in unexpected changes of plan. He'd never intended to make a career of development. Rather his vocation was pastoral. What happened?

Born the son of a pastor at Yabaondo, west of Kisangani,in 1965, John Lihamba did his early schooling locally. Only during commercial studies did he move, to Kisangani and then to Kinshasa, getting his State Diploma in 1985. The door opened to study commercial engineering.

When his college moved to Kisantu, in Lower Congo, John attended a CBFC church where he met Aline. He researched a cement factory project and, when he qualified in 1992, this led to work on development projects.

Back in Kinshasa with his brother, an army officer, he helped in the Protestant chaplaincy and planted new causes. This reinforced the pastoral vocation he'd felt since his baptism at the age of 12. He joined a CBFC church, became a deacon and obtained their backing for theological studies.

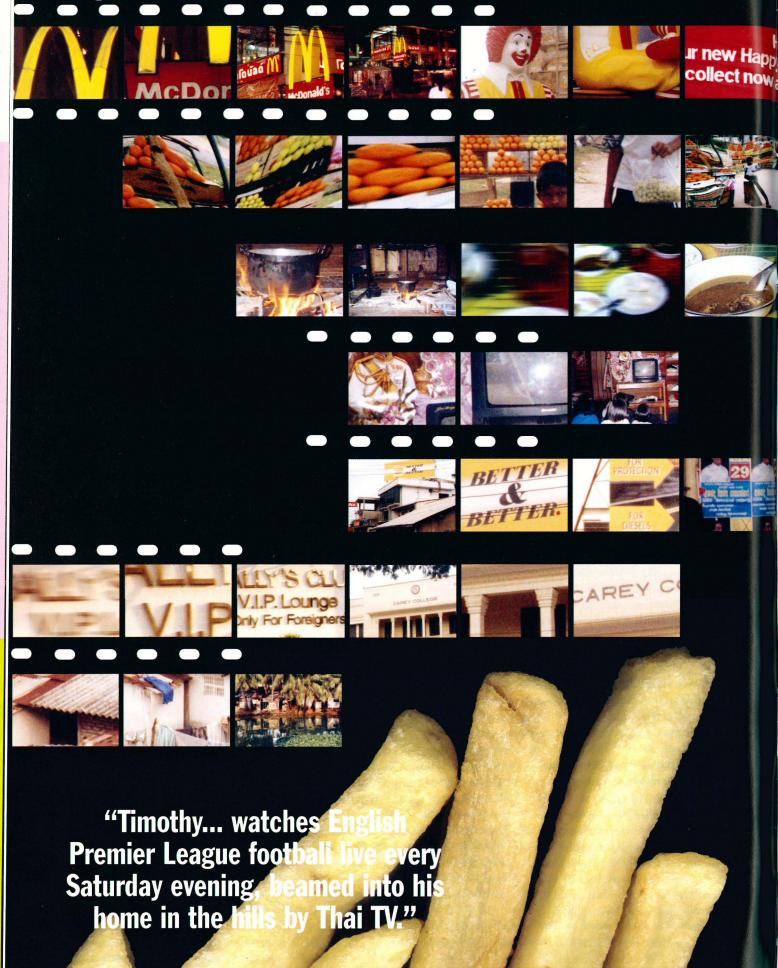
Away from home for ten years, he needed to go and talk to his parents about his vocation, studies and marriage to Aline. He found them ill and decided to stay until they were better. Within a week he had been asked to manage the sale of produce from the TOMIBIKISA development project.

Months later, during a two week visit to Kinshasa, he contrived, astonishingly, to marry Aline and their first baby was born at Lingungu a year later. In April 1998, John became the TOMIBIKISA manager and development programmes co-ordinator and subsequently came the opportunity for a study visit to Cameroon.

So, has John lost his pastoral vocation? No. As a man of faith, he says it is on the back burner while he awaits God's leading. Once back in Kisangani, he'll take it from there

Owen Clark is a church worker with BMS in DRC

big world, small world



SIMON JONES asks if it's now possible to have...

aster Saturday. Southampton
versus Arsenal live on satellite TV.
Timothy, Jacqui and I put our feet
up in front of the box with a bottle
bf Seven-Up each, buzzing about
the form of the teams and the prospects
for the match and its bearing on the
outcome of the championship. Timothy's
almost-teenage son argues with his Dad
about which team is the best and who's
going to win

A typical British suburban scene? No. We're in Karen country, 150km north of Chiang Mai in Thailand, five hours beyond the end of the tarmac. We're in a typical Karen house, built on stilts in a village of 50 such homes carved out of the forest, clinging to the hillside. Outside the cicadas have begun their nightly chorus.

Timothy is a Karen pastor who doesn't speak the language of the teams he knows so much about. He watches English Premier League football live every Saturday evening of the season, beamed into his home in the hills by Thai TV – courtesy of a deal with Sky.

The broadcast is sponsored by Nike, Castrol and Sharp electronics. The ads that interrupt the soccer are for British fashions, German cars, Japanese computers, overseas holidays in places even more exotic and expensive than Thailand. All products way beyond Timothy's reach. Thai TV aims its coverage of British football at a cosmopolitan minority of the Thai population enjoying the same level of consumer choice that the average Brit Arsenal or Southampton fan does.

There is something gloriously surreal about this scene. Here's a little bit of a quintessentially English Saturday afternoon served up on steamy Saturday evening in a Karen village 7,000 miles from Highbury. And Timothy knows more about these teams than I do – I reckon he'd give Alan Hansen a run for his money!

But just an hour before, we had sat in the kitchen of one of Timothy's neighbours, watching the family light a wood fire to cook the rice that will form the bulk of their meal that evening as it does every evening. While mum prepares the rice, her daughter cuts up pieces of sugarcane, a luxury snack for their visitors.

Everywhere you go in Asia you see evidence of globalisation. The billboards urging you to buy Coca Cola and Benson and Hedges cigarettes, the shops proudly declaring that they take Visa, the prosperous young in Adidas training shoes and Yves Saint Laurent shirts. And in every capital and second city, a McDonalds, a Burger King, a Pizza Hut and a Svensons – home from home for every western visitor!

You see it in the obvious places, like airliners. Every carrier offers the same diet of bland, westernised food, Hollywood movies and MTV music. You see it in the hotel complexes on the edge of the business districts, like the Criscat shopping centre in Colombo – designer clothes stores, smart cafés offering cappuccinos and chocolate chip cookies to shoppers in need of a break, conversations constantly interrupted by the chirruping of mobile phones. You see it in the satellite dishes that adorn suburban homes. You see it on the faces of young people keen to learn English.

Strolling in the midday sun in Karachi, looking for an air-conditioned café to get some respite from the heat, I'm accosted by two young Pakistanis – one in traditional shalwar chemise, the other in Wranglers and Ralph Lauren polo shirt – who ask if I'm American. 'English,' I reply. 'Will you talk to us to help with our English conversation,' they ask eagerly. Both are studying and keen to pass exams in spoken English that will open up job opportunities in the multi-national companies based in Pakistan's second city.

They're all for fixing up an appointment there and then for their first conversation class. But I explain that I'm leaving the following day. 'How can we get better English,' they plead. 'Keep accosting tourists on the road,' I tell them.

In Sri Lanka, I stood in Cinnamon Gardens Baptist Church talking with the pastor and a deacon about what goes on in the church during the week. They showed me the place where they hope that English classes will soon happen and the room where eager young Sri Lankans learn computer skills. Why? Because employment for third world young people in third world cities requires first world skills – especially English and computerese.

This is globalisation.

Nepal is not noted for its cuisine. Dal baht – rice and curried vegetables – is what most Nepalese eat two or three times a day every day. After five days of this diet, I was ready for chips. As we headed back from the South of the country to Kathmandu, we were planning our evening. The bus bumped along the road that clung to the side of the mountain, through ramshackle hamlets of makeshift homes, past barely-clothed kids and their parents scraping a living out of the forbidding landscape.

We were dreaming of showers and a change of clothes, an ice-cold lemon Fanta and chips.

Twenty years ago chips wouldn't have been an option. Now Kathmandu has a selection of restaurants offering varieties of western food – pizzas, burgers, ice cream, chips. There is no McDonalds in Kathmandu – but is that only a matter of time? The restaurants have sprung up in the midst of one of the poorest cities in the world to meet the needs of growing numbers of tourists en route to trekking in the Himalayas, the tiny urban elite who run the government service or work with western organisations and the large number of expats working in the country.

Globalisation has all sorts of complex consequences for countries like Thailand, Sri Lanka, Pakistan and Nepal – the promise of wealth, educational advance, loss of control over their culture and development. For me, it meant I could have chips with a view over Kathmandu – all twinkling lights, bustling activity and possibility for a better future.

Simon Jones is BMS Co-ordinator for London and south east England.

Alex Black asks Is there a future for the

n the tourist markets of the towns and at the roadside by waterfalls and other attractions, local artefacts are offered for sale. Tourists, from far and near, enjoy haggling over the price of souvenirs with the women who set up their stalls selling a wide range of village handicrafts. Musical pipes alongside bows and arrows and hand-woven cloth at one stall. Next to it, women less that five feet tall sell ornate head-dresses decorated with silver discs. Their distinctive striped shirts with long fringes can be bought at another. There are wood carvings and basket work, long steel knives, model elephants and necklaces of various designs and materials.

In some ways the setting could be anywhere. In fact, I'm describing a typical scene from the border country of Thailand – an area where the hilltribe people live.

They are definitely not Thai people, but they have lived within Thailand's borders for centuries. People such as the Karen, Lahu and Akha have their own very distinctive cultures; different languages; varied traditions; and respective styles of dress, but they do not have a recognised country of their own.

Their origins vary too.

Some have migrated from southern parts of China, while others have crossed from Myanmar (Burma). Some lived in the area before the modern borders of Thailand were fixed, others have arrived within the past few years as either economic migrants or as refugees. Today there are about ten distinct 'tribes' represented, with a number of subdivisions of tribal groups.

Most of the hilltribe people still live in small villages in the mountainous areas of the north and west of Thailand. Their lifestyle is traditional, based on shifting agriculture, that is, they farmed an area of land for two or three years and then moved on to 'slash-and-burn' another clearing in the forest. This ensured that their crops produced a high enough yield to feed the village families, with the downside that the forest needed years to recover. With both a growing population and a growing economy in Thailand, demand for forest products has risen and there is more and more pressure on the land. Deforestation is a major problem and the traditional hilltribe farming

"What legal-rights does a family have if they don't hold citizenship papers?"

methods cannot be sustained.

In order to take advantage of the developing Thai economy, with its spreading road and telephone networks, electricity and water supplies and medical facilities, villages have to remain static, and it is necessary to grow a cash crop or produce goods for sale in order to earn money to pay for these services. The old way of life can no more be sustained in the mountain forests of Thailand than it can be here in the UK as we enter the new millennium.

Modern Thailand is a democratic monarchy. Freedoms and rights, very like those in Britain, are formulated in the law and all citizens are entitled to fair treatment. But the hilltribe people suffer the plight of second-class citizens. For example, the law requires that all citizens have correct papers. But in a culture that is based in remote villages, few births are registered and papers for land ownership are often non-existent. What legal rights does a family have if they don't hold citizenship papers? How are their children to be educated? How are their young people to get work outside the village?

Children growing up in a hilltribe village learn to speak the traditional language of their parents. If they learn any Thai at all, it isn't sufficient even for primary education. Five-year-olds need to go to school if they are to fit into modern Thai society – or even to trade successfully with the rest of the country in which they were born. But it is difficult to get teachers to move into the remote areas, so there is either no school, or only a part-time school in or near many villages.

There is a background of poverty – in many cases great poverty and considerable deprivation. That is why some will supplement their income selling traditional products. Some feel that the tourists are being exploited – and others that the hilltribe people are being exploited.

But who is being exploited when an opium-addicted Akha father is persuaded to sell his daughter for the equivalent of well under £50? There is no doubt as to the exploitation when she is then 'employed' in the sex trade.

In an attempt to help hilltribe people out of the cycle of poverty and exploitation, Christians from around the world support the work of schools like Sahasartsuksa School in Chiang Rai. There, over 1,000 children from nine different hill tribes receive an education. The school is registered with the

hilltribe peoples of Thailand?

Education Ministry and the full Thai curriculum is taught. But first, most of the children have to learn Thai!

Educated young people are less likely to be caught up in the illegal drugs trade and the growing of opium as a cash crop. They are more likely to be able to get a fair price for the crops they grow and the goods they sell. They are more likely to be able to cope with the intricacies of Thai bureaucracy. They will understand better the modern Thai culture and economic system. They will be more likely to recognise the true intent of those middlemen who offer work in 'hotels' in the growing cities and tourist resorts. In short, they will be able to stand alongside those of Thai descent and help to build a better future for their children.

Alex Black, until recently, was a teacher in Thailand with

English as she is S

SIMON JONES AND JAN KENDALL

INVESTIGATE THE PLACE OF THE **ENGLISH** LANGUAGE IN MISSION

demonstration like a thousand others? Where did it take place? London, Birmingham, Edinburgh, Dublin, Brussels, Sydney, New York?

In fact it happened in Pristina in Kosovo.

Why did the other cities come immediately to mind?

Because the banners were in English.

English is the world's leading international language. About 350 million people speak English as their first language. The total number of English speakers in the world is estimated to be 460 million, second only to Mandarin Chinese. It is the language of commerce, of business, of diplomacy and of tourism. It is the language of the media, hence, the placards above. The BBC and CNN would not have looked at the demonstrators if they had used their mother tongue.

"The global culture speaks English or better, American. American English has become the world's primary national language in culture and the arts as well as in science, technology, commerce, transportation and banking. The debate over whether America or Japan has seized global leadership is conducted in English. Music television sings, shouts and raps in English. French cinema ads are now frequently in English." So says Benjamin Barber, an American professor of political science.

Stuart Christine, BMS Training Coordinator in São Paulo, Brazil, speaks of



I teach is

another day

of friendship

evangelism"

young people in Third World cities needing to learn first world skills - and top of that list is English.

BMS currently has five volunteers working worldwide, teaching English as a foreign language "Each day (TEFL). Phil

Rigotti is in Albania,

filling in for Roger and Nikki Pearce, while they are back in the UK. He left the Royal Marines in June, and immediately started work straight away teaching English,

having previously done a TEFL course.

"I became a TEFL teacher because God showed me how valuable it can be in spreading the message of Christ. Every time I step into the classroom I expect my students to tell me about their families, their hobbies, interests, beliefs, to express themselves in new ways.

"In the classroom the opportunities arise to talk about things that would often be difficult to bring into conversation otherwise. Each day I teach is another day of friendship evangelism. The chances to share my

faith are many. I believe that by enabling people throughout the world to speak English I am also increasing their opportunities to learn more about Christ and to see his love in action."

Nick Cady has recently gone to Sri Lanka to teach English for

a year. There are a huge number of opportunities there including teaching English and computer skills to young Sri Lankans keen to work for multinationals in finance, import-export or communications.

Then there's Margaret Pitt, Stan Hornsby and Jenny Smith teaching

oke



English at theological institutions in Hungary. Students need to know English to be able to read their text books.

You want to serve God overseas, but don't see what you could do? You could use what you already have - your knowledge of English - and teach it to people hungry to learn. The list of opportunities for people to use this as a springboard to draw alongside people and share the love of God with them is almost endless. TEFL teachers are needed in Hungary, Poland, Nepal, China, Sri Lanka, Albania, Thailand and some closed countries. Want to know more ring BMS Volunteers department 01235 517654.

Simon Jones is BMS Co-ordinator for London and the South East.

Jan Kendall is BMS Editorial Co-ordinator. This article is named after the title of a Portuguese-English conversational guide.

get a grip...

GERARD KELLY TALKS ABOUT
GLOBALISATION AND FRAGMENTATION

lot of what is going on in technological change is being echoed and reinforced by historical change across the planet. The Berlin wall was the last – for the time being – great empire to collapse and it has introduced a new way of nations and people relating to each other. A post-imperial world order is one in which the old order of colonies and empires is gone, including the Communist empire, and in its place a new world order is shaped by the twin forces of globalisation and fragmentation.

Globalisation and fragmentation is what we saw in the former Yugoslavia globalisation brought the outdoor fences down, fragmentation pulled in the indoor fences, and suddenly we get bloodbath. Globalisation and fragmentation is also what we wrestle with when we are planning Spring Harvest - do you bring everybody together or do you let them fragment? It's what every church planter in the country wrestles with - do we have one congregation for everybody to express unity or do we allow people to fragment into cultural groups? It's a major tension at the heart of our society.

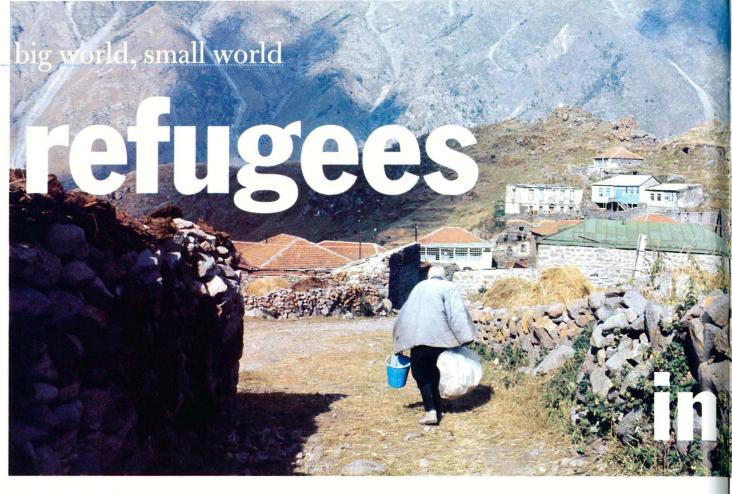
A Canadian journalist who lives in London called Michael Ignatieff expressed it brilliantly a few years ago now. "The more evident our common needs as a species become, the more brutal becomes the human insistence on the clothes of difference." He said, "The centripetal forces of need, labour and science which are pulling us

together are counterbalanced by centrifugal forces – the claims of tribe, race, class, section, region and nation – pulling us apart." Do you get this picture of two forces? People are being pulled into this global economy, this global network of information, but at the same time because they sense their identities being lost, they are insisting on fighting for smaller and smaller pieces of identity. It's the end of the nation state and it goes in two directions – upwards to the global thing but downwards to the local and regional conflict.

It has massive implications. People cannot live as global citizens; it's too big to give meaning, so as the world globalises more and more and as markets meld into one – so kids all over the world wear American sneakers and American jeans – it creates this turmoil inside with a desire to dissolve. We get this tension in our cities, this tension in our lives and it's going to shape a lot of what happens to us over the next ten years, these twin forces of globalisation pulling us together and fragmentation tearing us apart.

The above was taken from a presentation given by Gerard Kelly at a recent EMA conference. It is a theme of his new book, Get a Grip on the Future without losing your Hold on the Past, published by Monarch, price £7.99

Margaret Pitt,



WE SEE TOO OFTEN THE VICTIMS OF FRAGMENTATION ON OUR TV SCREENS. HERE ARE TWO SHORT STORIES BY KARL HEINZ **WALTER** ABOUT LIFE AFTER REGIONAL CONFLICT IN GEORGIA.

A refugee's fate

waited the whole time for him to look at me. I kept the camera ready, even though it isn't really my cup of tea to take this kind of picture. I never got a photo of his face.

It was a cold evening in November. The sun had set and only its last gleam gave a clearness to the sky. Driving through a 'road hole alley' we reached the refugee camp. Earlier on, Russian officers with their families lived in these buildings. How many refugees from Abchasia may live there now? I couldn't find out. We were looking for a pastor and his wife. At last we found them in front of a self-made stable. In this stable

they keep a few healthy-looking goats. Selling goats provides part of their living. The man gets up a few times every night to make sure the stable is unharmed and the goats still in place.

"He thinks he has betrayed his church by leaving the country"

But his real problem lies much deeper. He thinks he has betrayed his church by leaving the country. But everybody had to leave! "I have a call and now I am sitting here with my goats!" Why doesn't he start a work among the refugees? I asked. He cannot because his dialect is different from most of the others. He may tend goats in the refugee camp, but his 'sheep' as a pastor are back in the mountains where he came from. But who has got the money to help him?

While the two interpreters spoke

back and forth, I had time to observe him and his wife. She looked at us with a deep sadness on her face. Later on I got to know that she was ill. But a thorough check-up is not possible: "Where shall I get the money from?"

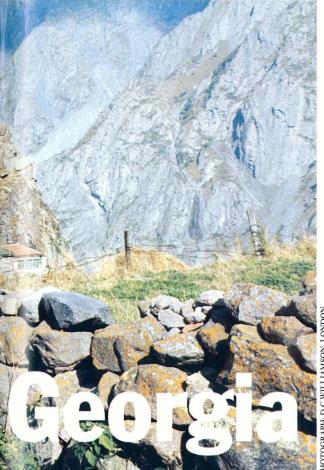
A senseless fight for Abchasia had taken a couple's strength to live on. Two people lost their inner dignity through their lives as refugees and also the strength to handle the situation even though they are Christians. Who will condemn them?

The children of Batumi

Batumi is a port town on the Black Sea in the Republic of Georgia, formerly in the Soviet Union. Many beautiful buildings from the time of the tsars recall when this was a popular and beautiful resort. But life is no longer happy in Batumi, and few visitors come here to find out how people are living.

Since unrest and local outbreaks of regional conflict, a lot of people are suffering in Batumi. Gas and electricity for heating and cooking are not provided consistently.

On a recent visit there, I sat in a small room in the prayer house (meeting place) of the little Baptist church. It is almost bare of furniture or provisions. A local doctor looks after



Steve Flashman giving out tooth brushes at Kibera slum. Nairobi

Village in Caucasian mountains, Georgia

the sick, working out of this little room. He has almost no medicine; he gives it to members and friends of the church without charge.

He pours out his discouragement to me. He is a paediatrician, and he is most burdened for the children of Batumi. This is the fourth winter when there has been no heat. Children less then four years old have never known a warm home in winter. High humidity even in the summer causes the walls and ceilings in the houses to stay moist; that attracts mould or mildew. The homes never dry out. I, especially, felt the wet cold coming from the walls because I wasn't used to it.

Children here show typical deficiency symptoms from lack of good nutrition. Many of them suffer from vitamin deficiency diseases such as rickets. The dampness brings bronchial asthma. Pneumonia appears regularly. Low immunity brings neurodermatitis and other illnesses.

Editor's Note: £5,000 was subsequently given from the BMS Relief Fund to help with the feeding programme in Batumi.

Karl Heinz Walter is former General Secretary of the European Baptist Federation.





Walk down the alleyway between the Jets and the Sharks and you're on the set of one of the most successful musicals of all time - West Side Story, As Tony and Maria get caught in the crossfire of gang warfare, this modern adaptation of Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet has an uncanny resemblance to events happening now on the world stage. The effect of globalisation has created a small world where the boundaries of travel and experience have been smashed and where the cross-fertilisation of ideas has destroyed any concept of absolute truth. So it's not surprising that in every part of the world people are struggling to find their cultural identity, which has been blurred by a confusing mix of ideologies, beliefs and lifestyles, all vying for attention, but lost in the whole.

This can have dangerous repercussions when the search for cultural identity becomes an introspective form of tribalism. In January 1993 one eminent observer of European history said: "there are potential Yugoslavias al across Europe as racial and cultural groupings replace the political lines on the map." A quick glance at recent European history tells the story -Hungarians living in Romania were prominent in the overthrow of Ceaucescu, and have been blamed for post revolution troubles; the crisis in the Balkans has been in the headlines for two decades; Basque nationalism has been on the rise in Spain; Northern Ireland struggles to find peace between opposing factions; and the beautiful island of Cyprus aches with the pain of conflict. The picture is repeated around the world where indigenous peoples fight for survival against oppressive regimes, and deep-rooted tribal feuds bring hatred and death to innocent people.

Even within the church there have been struggles with a form of tribalism called 'denominationalism' which has given both a positive identity to people wanting to express their faith in different ways and caused external confusion as onlookers have puzzled at the credibility of a God reflected in fractious

Unfortunately, we can never seem to get it right! For although cultural identity is important because it provides a framework for understanding who we are, God's bigger picture takes us into another dimension of living that transcends a merely human perspective. Perhaps that is what Bernstein and Sondheim were trying to communicate in such song lyrics as "all the best

> sounds of the world in a single word, Maria..." and "there's a place for us, somewhere a place for us..." because the fundamental yearning of the human heart can never be satisfied when we retreat into a tiny world of self indulgence. By God's grace we must discover how our world can meet someone else's world, however far on the other side of the street they live.

Steve Flashman is a Baptist minister and International Director of Soapbox Expeditions.

big world, small world Smin eentur

JOHN FINNEY TALKS OF NEW OPPORTUNITIES

hy does New Labour studiously avoid using the 'S' word socialism? Why are Alpha and Emmaus groups the most successful forms of evangelism today?

Why is history regarded as suspect in many universities?

Why is the Holy Spirit popular? Why can't people answer Pilate's question, 'What is truth?'?

We live in a weird world – the contents of the entire British Library could be sent to Japan in 42 seconds, but half the world's population have never used a phone.

Evangelism in the next century has to come to terms with the change of thinking which has taken place in the last few years. The Christian faith has always been good at adapting to different contexts - the Jewish world... the Greek... the Roman... the Germanic... the medieval... Africa... India...

Now it faces a double challenge in the Western world – to adapt to both modernism and post-modernism. The first we are familiar with – the world of science and logic and rationality. We have spent the last 200 years coming to terms with a prevailing culture which thought that faith was foolish because it was irrational, the Bible was just another old book and the Church a

gathering of the deluded. But people these days feel that modernism has led us astray into a mechanised wilderness, that it cannot explain human feelings and behaviour, promises a progress which it cannot deliver and leads to a

"You have been abducted by aliens? **fascinating** tell us all about it."

world choking on its own waste products.

Post-modernism we are only just getting to grips with, not least because there is no book or electronic aid which tells you exactly what it is. It believes in fuzziness and is itself fuzzy. It is a world of relativism, where there is no such thing as 'truth', people's experiences are more important than their reason, everything is fun and laidback and nothing is to be taken seriously except the cardinal sin of intolerance.

Evangelism has to swim in this new world. What can we do about it?

1 Spirituality is in. But what a spirituality! People have rejected the rationality of modernism in favour of a riot of 'anything goes' - crystals, Gaia, star-signs, Mystic Meg and all the rest of it. Sixty per cent of people say they pray. The evangelist will say, as Paul said in Athens when he saw them worshipping the altar to an 'Unknown God', 'he is not far from any one of us'. The good evangelist does not say, 'You are wrong', he or she starts where people are. And they are fascinated by God – who he is, how he may be found, how he can be fitted into their lives. Few of the present generation know much about God since they did not go to Sunday school. But people know there is a great universe out there, and they want to know about the Creator. People seem ready to tackle the big issues: recently I have found people fascinated by the doctrine of the Trinity and all that it says of relationships, movement, mystery and community.

2 People are frightened by people who think they have all the answers - whether it is an advertiser, a politician or a preacher. We are all suspicious of the 'expert' who tells us what is right for our health or

big world, small world

our wealth. People want things to be human, and faith if it is presented as glory all the way is rejected as unreal. They want to travel at their own pace hence the popularity of Emmaus and Alpha where discussion and time enables unhurried commitments to be made.

3 Story is in. Even the most bizarre stories are accepted as worth listening to. You have been abducted by aliens? fascinating, tell us all about it. This means people are interested in what happened to you: you have found Christ? - how interesting. Testimony is one of the main ways of communicating the reality of God these days. The same is true of the Bible the Book of Stories. Tell its stories vividly, accurately and imaginatively and see their effect on a generation who have never heard them before. Remember that doctrine is story interpreted: before a theory of atonement there has to be a crucifixion. Preachers too often assume that people know the stories and leap to the interpretation. Jesus loved stories and so should we.

4 In universities history is

out. As one post-modernist historian said 'history is about winners not losers... history is deeply male; history is about the rich and famous, not the poor'. Nevertheless, outside academic circles history is seen as the recovery of roots - and the history of the Bible and the church still interests many, as you can see when strange interpretations gain a few days' notoriety. In particular show the story from the point of view of the ordinary Christian: what was it like being a member of the congregation in Corinth, what did it feel like being led out to death before 50,000 people in the Coliseum, what happens today to Christians in Pakistan or the Sudan or Korea?

So what?

We are living in a curious twoheaded and unstable world. Half of our thinking is modernist – for it is that world which produces our washing

machines and cars, and also a sense that things are out of our control. The other half is post-modernist – laid back, distrustful of claims about truth, uneasy about progress and concerned for the poor and the marginalised. Culture is difficult to define for it is the very air we breathe.

Evangelism in the future has to take account of the new ways that people think and believe, difficult as it is to get hold of something as ill defined as post-modernism. It gives us great opportunities, but bewilders us because the old landmarks are taken away.

Rt Revd John Finney is the former **Bishop of Pontefract**

This article has been rewritten from the paper given by Bishop Finney at the Lausanne International Consultation on Nominalism, and is reproduced here with permission.



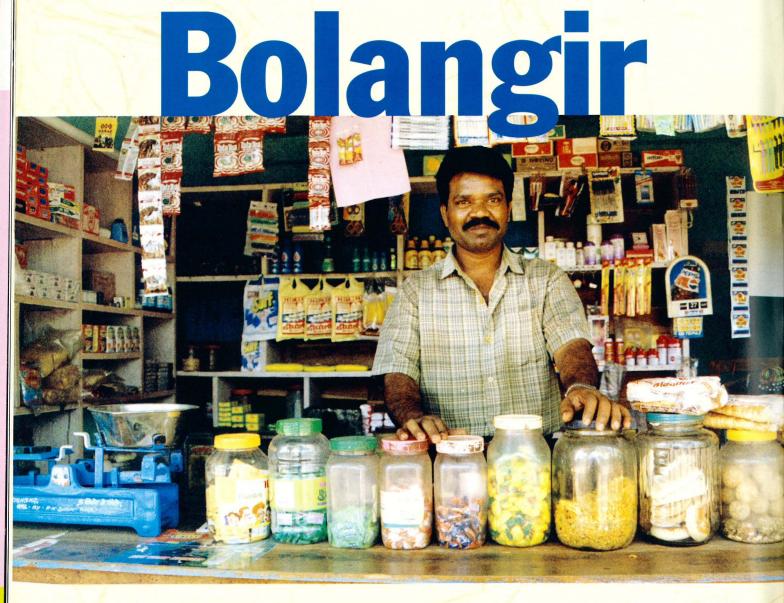












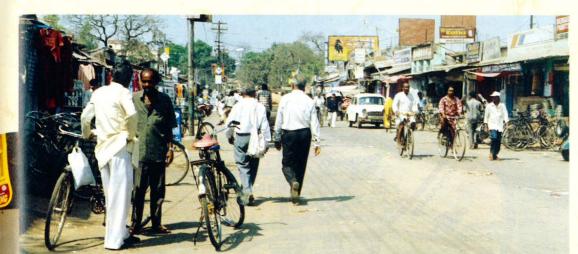
Introduction

Bolangir is a district headquarters town in Orissa, India, from where the whole district of Bolangir is administered. It was the headquarters of the Superintendent of Patna State, the administrative head of that area, during the time of the British Raj. Many of the buildings erected during that time are still the official offices and residences today. The last man to hold the Superintendent's post is buried in the Church of North India cemetery in Bolangir. He died from complications arising from injuries received when he went to look at a tiger he had shot and thought was dead, only to have it attack him. Bolangir was also the home of the Singh Deo family - the Maharajas - whose palace still stands as a reminder of days gone by.

Bolangir has grown considerably in recent years, as many people have moved in from the villages - mostly in the hope of finding work - but now there is no more land to purchase. Bolangir, as a town, is not large and it takes only minutes to pass through. Within minutes of leaving it, one is surrounded on all sides by rice fields, hills and villages. There is no irrigation in this area and the farmers are

dependant on an erratic rainfall. The area is very drought prone and it is recognised as being one of the most backward districts in the nation. At the most, there will be only one rice crop per year and there is no industry in the area. These are just two of the reasons contributing to the poverty of this area. Unemployment is very high, particularly amongst the educated youth, and a lack of education amongst the older folk means they are only able to do labouring jobs, and these are often hard to find for the vast number of people looking for them.

our town: Bolangir



One main street of Bolangir town

Sunday Market

Bride arriving for her wedding at Bolangir Church

First Impressions

by Maureen Anthony and Janet Holdaway

- Everywhere was very dusty and became muddy when it rained.
- The people were very friendly we were invited to a lot of meals and even weddings!
- Shops were only like huts, but sold very nice material, towels and clothes.
- In the shops, chairs were supplied and coffee given while being served.
 Purchases were packed neatly into bags.
- There's a very big gap between the poor and the better off.
- Men wearing dhotis and men wearing western clothes all walking around together.

Roads and rail

There are four main roads leading into Bolangir town. Sambalpur, Sonepur, Titlagarh and Patnagarh. Daily people arrive in town, travelling in buses, trucks, jeeps, cars, motorbikes, scooters, cycles, rickshaws and on foot. During the day the town is swarming with people. Some come for shopping, but most come for the various government offices and official work. Yet, even until 1970, the only cars and jeeps seen were official ones or vehicles owned by the missionaries. Most people had never seen a motorbike or scooter. Now these things are in great abundance. Traffic on the roads has increased so much that it is a slow ride through the town in the daytime.





The railway station is on the outskirts of town. There is one train daily going down to Calcutta and one train a day going to South India. These have sleeper facilities. There are also a few local passenger trains.

Shops and markets

In the daily market, various kinds of vegetables, fruits, cereals, pulses, fish and other daily needs can be purchased. The weekly market is very much larger and is held on Sundays. People come from miles around to buy and sell, bartering for a good price. Many goods are available at the weekly market which are not available at any other time. Sunday is a holiday for schools and offices and there is also a cattle market on Sundays where cows, bullocks and goats are bought and sold.

Where once there were only a handful of shops, they now line many streets. There are quite a number of Gujerati businessmen who own some of the larger shops. Favourite shops for many are those that sell the famous tie and dye weaving known as Sambalpuri, for which the people of this area are rightly very proud. On Saturdays, all these larger shops are required by law

to be closed.

At the Sunday market holy men come with all the rituals and attire of their profession, sometimes mahouts with their elephants call in on their pilgrimages, snake charmers with their snakes in baskets never fail to get an audience and then there are monkeys that also entertain. Not surprisingly, the Sunday market is always very crowded.

Law and order

Opposite the Mission Compound is the District Court. This too brings a large number of people daily who come to

our town: Bolangir



Far left: Bolangir Central Church , Easter Sunday service

Bolangir Church, Church of North India

have their cases dealt with in the court. Many of these will be land disputes, while those who have committed crimes will have to make regular appearances. Prisoners kept in the jail are also brought for hearing their cases. In the past, prisoners could be seen handcuffed to a police officer and walking from the jail. Or, if there were many, roped together and paraded on the streets. Nowadays they are usually brought in police vans.

Sickness and health

Bolangir has a hospital which caters for the whole district, but with minimal facilities. The hospital area swarms daily with the patients and their relatives. Seeing the doctor there does not cost money, but all tests, treatments and medicines do, even for the patients admitted to the hospital. Then also, relatives have to stay with the patients, sleeping on the floor. They bring all they need to cook their meals outside and to take care of the daily needs of the patient. Some more serious cases have to go to the Medical College at Burla, some 60 miles away. There are a number of private doctors and a private hospital - all of whom charge. The number of medicine shops probably outnumber any other.

Just outside the town there are several colonies where people affected by leprosy live. Leprosy is very common in this area. Each week on a Monday, sufferers come into town to visit the shops. Many of these people are very badly disfigured. They are not allowed inside, but the shopkeepers keep their small coins in a dish and will throw a few to the leprosy sufferers when they call out as they pass.

Religion

The majority of people in the town are Hindus and there are a number of temples there. Quite often processions with bands and music for various festivals and functions take place through the town to the temples, which people stop to watch. The Dassahara is the longest festival for the Hindus, when the town takes on a very festive air with streets and temples lit up for many days. This is followed shortly afterwards with Diwali – the Festival of Lights – when houses are lit up and fireworks light up the night sky.

There are a number of churches in Bolangir Town, the Church of North India being the largest. In fact, so large is the membership that the church building is nowhere near large enough to accommodate everyone. On special occasions, when more people want to attend - like Easter and Christmas arrangements to hold the services out of doors have to be made. The Roman Catholic church has the largest English school, known as 'Little Flower'. They have a number of nuns who have come from other areas of India. From time to time the churches have joint activities and a good relationship exists between most of them.

Profile Bilhan Sagar

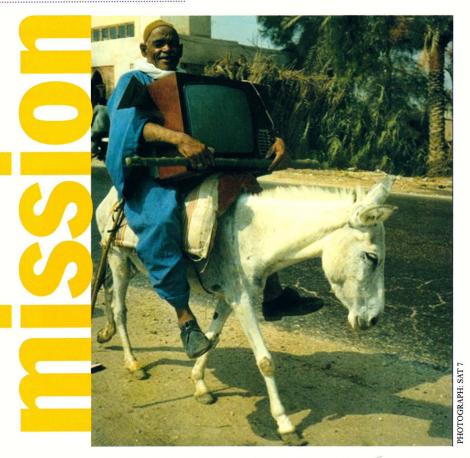
Bilhan is a young Christian man who lives on the Mission Compound. He has studied in college and has a BSc degree with Botany as his honours subject. He has also taken a course in journalism and holds a Diploma in Tax and Financial Management. He is a good artist and from time to time designs posters for companies and

botany charts for universities. A few years ago he started an organisation called 'Friends for Human Development' with whom he works voluntarily, helping children through providing help with education, and giving training to parents and others involved in child care work. As a result, many children living at home have had help in areas where they needed it, enabling them to be educated and find their potential in life. He is assisted by a number of other Christian young people and supporters.



Alaka Jena

Alaka and her family have a long history of involvement in Christian work. She is a retired high school headmistress and school inspector. In retirement she has given time to helping with the translation of letters for girls in the sponsorship programme. She is also involved in proof reading the books of the Oriya Bible for Compass Braille so that the Bible can be made available to blind people in Orissa.



AS JOHN AND JEAN ROGERS MOVED TOWARDS RETIREMENT, THEY DECIDED NOW WAS NOT THE TIME TO SIT BACK AND RELAX, BUT TO OFFER THEIR SKILLS AND NEWLY-AVAILABLE TIME IN OVERSEAS SERVICE. HERE THEY TALK ABOUT LIFE AT THE HI-TECH END OF MISSION.

"they dare to have vision and dream the unthinkable"

For more information on volunteering possibilities for anyone aged 18+, call the volunteers department on 01235 517654.

orty multi-national Christians spread throughout Egypt,

Jordan, Lebanon and Cyprus spend their days (and nights) sitting behind desks operating computers, designing virtual studios, commissioning and reviewing new scripts, translating into Arabic, purchasing hi-tech equipment, manning the counselling telephones, assembling the broadcasts, discipling converts...

Together as a team they produce the SAT-7 Christian TV broadcasts and keep the show rolling.

SAT-7 Christian TV broadcasts are deeply valued by millions of viewers in the Middle East and North Africa. The programmes are written, presented and filmed by Arabs, for an Arabic-speaking audience, presenting the gospel through children's and teaching programmes, dramas, music, and live events. Christians in this area need encouragement and SAT-7 gives them

the opportunity of knowing they are part of a wider Christian community in the region.

We staff the Chief Operations office. Our job has been to design, purchase and install a new, three-camera studio in Lebanon, plus a non-linear editing and virtual studio suite in Egypt. These are staffed by Christian Arabs and form the bedrock on which SAT-7 programmes are made. We also manage the satellite transmissions through the UK satellite operators, prepare budgets and monthly management accounts, prepare staffing and quality plans, arrange onair promotions, plan the big Millennium event and help raise finance. Sounds like the job we left!

Is this work any different from managing a hi-tech factory, which we did before joining SAT-7? We have the same computer programmes, financial problems, hi-tech equipment, suppliers and personnel, same satellite operators and same shortages of qualified staff. Deep-down, of course, the change is much greater. Christian workers in the Middle East and North Africa are deeply spiritual and work urgently for long hours with total dedication. They are experiencing miracles in their lives every day as they witness within an atmosphere of opposition, yet they dare to have vision and dream the unthinkable.

There is a life beyond retirement in our local churches and particularly on the mission field. We are grateful that the BMS offers a path to voluntary service. Having sold our own hi-tech business and retired in May 1999 at the age of 61, SAT-7 offers an experience and challenge equal to industry.

If God has equipped you with a profession or skill, then offer it. We knew we were in God's place in industry, and when we were working in young peoples and pastoral work at VRS Baptist Church, Chelmsford, and we now know we are in God's place on the mission field. If you have a pension, why not use it and offer your services

free in recognition of

all that God has done for you and in you.

from passion to action

TAKES TO BE A MEMBER OF A BMS ACTION TEAM.



"If you're up for an experience that will push you to your limits and change you forever... then go for it." (Mel Baxter, Brazil)

"I have learnt so much more than I could have imagined about myself, a different culture,

the world and everything. Most importantly, my relationship with God has been strengthened a huge amount. Definitely worth taking a year out for!"

(Hannah Pendrill, Nepal)



"I went away concentrating on how much I could give, and came back realising how much I had received." (Jo Shobbrook, Albania)

hese are the words of three young people whose lives and outlooks were radically altered by God through their year on the BMS 28:19 Action Team programme. Action Teams mobilise 18 to 25 year-olds into overseas mission service working with BMS church partners across the world.

Can you see yourself teaching Albanian young people how to play the guitar and so equipping young churches with the worship leaders of the future? What about playing games with Brazilian street children, showing them that there is a God who loves them and wants a better future for

them? Could you help to teach academic and vocational skills to blind girls in Dhaka, Bangladesh, so giving them hope of a future under their own control rather than to be sidelined forever by an uncaring society? Action Teams do all of this and much more.

Do you have what it takes? The list of vital skills is not long: passion for God and a desire to share that with others, faith in him to do mighty things through you, flexibility and a willingness to be trained and to have a go at anything. Year Teams are ideal for people wanting to take a year out either before or after university, but previous team members have also included a nurse seeking God's will for a career change and a nanny using her experience with children in Zimbabwe. Summer Teams are ideal if you have only a short time in July/August to give or if you would like a 'taster' before committing to a longer period of time.

Sound impelling? Why not find out more. Call, write to or email us at: 28:19 Action Teams, BMS, PO Box

49, Baptist House, Didcot, OX11 8XA Tel 01235 517654

Email actionteams@bms.org.uk



It's not JUST a year out, it's a fantastic life-changing experience, both in your relationship with God, and outlook on life. (Rachel Lambourne, Nepal)



Challenging, trying and testing, but great fun and the best thing have ever done. (David Edge, Thailand)

"A challenging year full of new experiences. My relationship with God has been strengthened and I will continue to draw upon the experiences that I've had. The scheme is really well-organised. It's hard work and tiring at times, but great fun and a terrific experience. Go for it!" (Jo Munro, France)



"It's a fantastic opportunity to open your eyes to a wider world that is crying out to hear the word of God and for someone to show they care. We may not all be preachers but all people wanted was love. That was something we could all give." (Hannah Black, Albania)



resources for leaders

Babel reversed?

Estimates (in millions) for mother-tongue speakers of the 20 most widely used languages.

1	Chinese	1,000
2	English	350
3	Spanish	250
4	Hindi	200
5	Arabic	150
5	Bengali	150
5	Russian	150
8	Portuguese	135
9	Japanese	120
10	German	100
11	French	70
11	Punjabi	70
13	Javanese	65
13	Bihari	65
15	Italian	60
15	Korean	60
17	Telugu	55
17	Tamil	55
19	Marathi	50
19	Vietnamese	50

Estimates (in millions) of the total population of all countries where the language has official or semi-official status.

1	English	1,400
2	Chinese	1,000
3	Hindi	700
4	Spanish	280
5	Russian	270
6	French	220
7	Arabic	170
8	Portuguese	160
8	Malay	160
10	Bengali	150
11	Japanese	120
12	German	100
13	Under	
	Urdu	85
14	ltalian (85 60
14 14		
-40 T	Italian	60
14	Italian Korean	60
14 14	Italian Korean Vietnamese	60 60 60
14 14 17	Italian Korean Vietnamese Persian	60 60 60 55
14 14 17 18	Italian Korean Vietnamese Persian Tagalog	60 60 60 55 50

NB These totals are often over-estimates, as only a minority of people in countries where a second language is recognised may actually be fluent in it.

(Chambers Book of Facts 1997)





If we could shrink the Earth's population to a village of 100 people, it would look something like this:

- 57 Asians, 21 Europeans, 14 from the Western hemisphere (north & south), 8 Africans.
- 52 would be female, 48 would be male.
- 70 would be non-white, 30 would be white.
- 70 would be non-Christian, 30 would be Christian.
- 89 would be heterosexual, 11 would be homosexual.
- 6 people would possess 59% of the village's wealth, and all 6 would be from the United States
- 80 would live in sub-standard housing.
- 70 would be unable to read.
- 50 would suffer from malnutrition.
- I would be near death, I would be near birth.
- 1 (yes, only 1) would have a college education.
- 1 would own a computer.

(Taken from CND Today, August 1999)

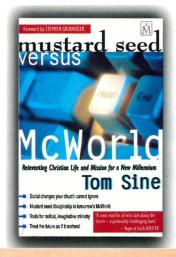


Number of Christians up to 2,000 million by year

According to religious statisticians David B Barrett and Todd M Johnson, based in Richmond, Virginia USA, the number of Christian people in the world will pass the 2,000 million mark in the year 2000. Christians already number 1,990 million, which means that one in three of the 6,000 million people in the world are Christians. ('Christian' covers Protestants, Roman Catholics, Orthodox, Anglicans, Charismatics and Pentecostals.) Muslims are the second-largest world religion with 1,190 million adherents, followed by Hindus 774 million; non-religious 768 million; Buddhists 359 million; tribal religions 252 million; atheists 151 million; new religions 101 million; Sikhs 22.7 million and Jews 14.2 million.

As a continent Europe has the largest number of church members: 536 million. Latin America is second with 463 million followed by Africa 333 million; Asia 295 million; North America 224 million and Oceania 20 million.

(EBPS August 1999)





Book Title:

Mustard Seed vs McWorld

Author:

Tom Sine

Publisher:

Monarch Books (ISBN 1 85424 435 3)

Reviewer:

Kevin G Brown, minister of Downs

Baptist Church, Hackney

No of pages:

348

Price: £8.99

Tom Sine announced himself as something of a prophet with The Mustard Seed Conspiracy (Word Books, 1981). He continues in the same vein in his new one.

He sees much of the race into the next millennium as a cry for help and asserts that despite these cries, God has not lost control. However Christians must wake up to the global realities or sink without trace. This is Christ's mustard seed verses a McDonalds-style take-over - a global contest, not against so-called 'free-market economics', but rather between very different value systems. How do we do battle in the new global order? How can we become part of God's 'breaking in'?

Sine develops his view that there exists a Crisis of Foresight and that Christian leaders in particular have to take the future seriously. He offers practical ways that churches and local communities can anticipate likely changes that will affect them.

He shows how Western Christians and church organisations have historically allowed modern culture to define their life-direction and structures, and challenges us all to begin to think why we do what we do, inviting us to reflect more biblically on the alternatives to the 'Western dream.'

One of the most exciting and enticing features of Sine's book is that it's practical. He makes real his recognition of the busy-ness and stress of modern life-styles by dividing the book for easy reading, using design-icons for easy reference.

Sine concludes that there is a future coming whether we like it or not, and much of it can be anticipated. But much of it can also be envisioned - and Christians can help to shape that future. Finally, God's Spirit is creatively working the future out through our imagination and genius, and that is precisely how he will address the challenges the future holds.

There's some very good juicy fruit to be found here. But be warned, if those who read it take it seriously, it could be dangerous - there is risk of a spiritual-contamination and who knows where that might end?

Book Title: Author: **Publisher:**

A Candle of Hope **Garth Hewitt** The Bible Reading

Fellowship

(ISBN 1 84101 041 3)

Reviewer:

John Smith, BMS Co-ordinator for Central & Eastern

England

No of pages:

192

Price:

£6.99

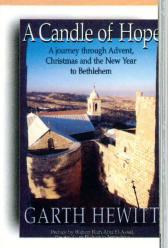
If you just want to settle down in an armchair with a good book, to welcome in the Millennium, an ideal choice is Garth Hewitt's A Candle of Hope, daily

Bible readings for this Advent, Christmas and the New Year. Hewitt draws on his personal contact with middle-Eastern

Christians, Jews and Muslims, to give a powerful picture of daily life in the Holy Land. Holy, that is, for all three religions. And so the stories of suffering and injustice are drawn from each community, and sometimes, more confusingly, from elsewhere in the world. Hewitt biblically reflects on the issues like Israel's nuclear stockpile, land for peace, West Bank settlements, the tourist industry, and much else.

These are no Sewlynesque daily notes. Each day will require much more of the reader than a few rushed minutes before the day's activities. Hewitt includes disturbing personal accounts of injustice, frequently to Palestinian people, Christian and Muslim. The daily portion also includes a Bible reading and some fascinating extra-biblical material about the history of the region. The book is worth the price for these insights alone. Hewitt allows some of his Palestinian contacts to speak directly to the reader in their own words. Suggested prayers and ideas of things to do complete many days. This is not a tidy book of blessed thoughts, but it pressed me to try and evaluate for myself a few more of the multitude of issues that is the Middle East.

Many Christians fervently pray for a lasting peace in a region that has seen two millennia of conflict. Others pray with passion for an apocalyptic crisis that will herald another kind of millennium. This book, uncomfortable as it is, helps the reader to better understand the grown-up issues of the real people who live in hope of justice and peace.



Olects 'ayer



WOW Project: Hook, Line & Sinker To help the people of Bangladesh to rebuild their lives after serious

flooding and cyclone damage in 1998. Target £10,000

So far £5,334

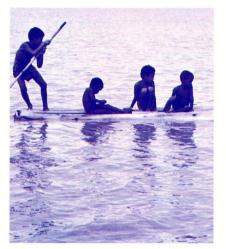
has been received towards Hook, Line & Sinker. Sunday

schools, in particular, have been raising money to help the people of Bangladesh so that fishing boats, nets and more fish could be provided. In this way, those who had their livelihoods destroyed by the longestever floods in Bangladesh's history can begin to rebuild their lives. About 60 per cent of the population spent some time living in trees or on roof tops to

avoid the water. Soon after the disaster struck, BMS sent a grant to the Bangladesh Baptist Sangha (Union) providing emergency kits for those who had lost their homes. These kits contained a candle, cigarette lighter, towel, rehydration solution, a sari and a lunghi. In the autumn of 1998 the rains stopped, and the water levels started to go down. Just when people thought they were getting back to

some sort of normality again, a cyclone struck, killing 150,000 fishermen in one night. Once again bridges, roads and houses have been rebuilt and fish pens repaired and stocked with fish.

Donations for Hook, Line & Sinker can be made until the end of December 1999. If your Sunday school or group is collecting for Hook, Line & Sinker, make sure they get their money in on time!





Reuben and Katie Martin: Zagreb, Croatia

Katie and Reuben completed six months training at Spurgeon's College at the end of 1998 and headed to Croatia, as the first BMS long-term workers in that country, in January 1999. Croatia is a land of contrasts. They write, "The bits we have seen of Croatia have been absolutely breathtaking. The sea is as blue as in the tourist brochures and the coast is dominated by 8,000 ft mountains and the 1,000 islands of the Dalmatian Adriatic. Yet set against this beauty is the terrible destruction of recent war. We have seen villages where every house has either been destroyed by shells or riddled with bullet holes from the conflict of 1991-1995. We have heard stories of murder, wounding, rape, and genocide and can't begin to imagine the horrors that many people here have been through. Croatia is now peaceful and looking to the future but the emotional and

economic effects of war are taking their toll."

The main focus of the couple's time so far has been to learn the very difficult language but they have also been 'thrown in at the deep end' with preaching assignments and leading an evangelistic English language course. Reuben has preached, through a translator, at two new churches south of Zagreb. These churches are part of the Croatian Baptist Union but are ethnically Serb. The majority of worshippers were women because the men had either been killed in the war or had fled the country. Reuben says, "It was terrific to see people who had obviously gone through so much so committed to following Jesus."

Please pray:

for good progress in language study. for more openings to use their teaching and pastoral skills to support the churches whilst they are still learning the language.

for the Baptist churches of Croatia, many of which have been newly formed in recent years - that the Lord would protect them, give them growth and help them to reach out to a people devastated by civil war.

Stanley and Nancy Hornsby: Budapest, Hungary



The Hornsbys are BMS volunteers who headed out to Hungary in September to spend an academic year at the Baptist

Theological Academy in Budapest. It is not the couple's first trip to Budapest, as they both taught English there in 1991 to 1992. Here they tell us how this latest term of service came about.

"The thing about praying is that often unexpected answers come along.

We know that each summer there are exciting opportunities for young people with various organisations. It was arranged for Stanley to advertise these opportunities one Saturday, enticing the young people along with hot dogs and coke. Then, Stanley noticed that BMS was asking for teachers of English to fill some vacancies in Budapest. Yes, you've guessed! There was much prayer and heart-searching - and here we are! Separation is painful: to leave our friends, our house and little garden, the church housegroup and the people at OASIS club, visits from relations and the comfort and assurance of neighbours and people we know. But we hope that there are benefits for us all in this enterprise. God is able to give us all new opportunities, new freedoms. We hope that people from the UK will visit us and see God at work in a different culture and get some new insights into the depth of his providence. We know there will be all sorts of problems and difficulties waiting for us in the days ahead and we know we will get tired and lonely. So we covet your prayers for ourselves, for Stanley's students, for the churches and Christians in Budapest, for the people we are leaving."

Please pray:

above and for God's strength, guidance and abiding presence in times of tiredness and loneliness.

pray for the strengthening of friendships made when last in Budapest and for new friendships to develop quickly.

Paul and Elisabeth Towlson: Durres, Albania



Paul and Elisabeth came to the end of their service with BMS in September, but just before that, they were involved in supporting Kosovan refugees. At the height of the crisis, there were 60,000 refugees in the port town of Durres. Paul, along with some OM missionaries, set up a food distribution service and Elisabeth, along with some Kosovan medical personnel, set up Emanuel Clinic to help meet some of their needs. Paul says, "It quickly became clear to us that the question of God, faith and the connection with the tragic events in Kosovo was fairly near the surface. In response to the questions of two Kosovans concerning Christian faith, I gave an invitation to a meeting for prayer and an explanation of one of the gospels. One of the two didn't turn up, but the one that did brought 20 others." Larger numbers of Kosovans began attending Sunday services too and were able to feel some

comfort from Christians praying for

them and their country.

As the war ended, no one was prepared for the incredible drive of the Kosovan people to return home and the expected gradual repatriation became a flood of people hiring transport to take them back. Paul joined a convoy taking food and other supplies into the country. Of the country, Paul says, "The amount of damage that has been done is incredible. There is much rebuilding and renewed hope... but the damage done to these people will not be put right by a few years of Balkan investment." But what of it's neighbour where the Towlsons have spent the past four-and-a-half years? "In many ways Kosovo has more hope than Albania. There is more initiative, and a stronger moral and spiritual tradition amongst Kosovans. In contrast, under the communist regime of Albania, initiative was driven out and corruption established as a way of life. These are some of the reasons that work in Albania is so challenging. But as we leave, one of the things that encourages us is that there are individual Albanians who are trying to work with integrity in a very difficult system."

prayer focus & people worldwide

Please pray:

p for peace in Kosovo between Serbs and ethnic Albanians. Only God can bring this.

🕑 for Christians in Kosovo and in Albania, reaching out to families who have been ripped apart by civil war and loss. Pray the churches would grow strong in faith, maturity and in numbers.

for Emanuel Clinic which is continuing to function for Albanian families in a poor area of Durres. A young Albanian doctor and an administrator are now heading up this work.

for Paul, Elisabeth and family who will be living in Switzerland near relatives whilst they explore the future ministry God has for them.



Hilary and Paul Drinkwater

Hilary and Paul returned to Nepal in June following a fourmonth break in the UK for medical treatment. Upon their return, Paul was pleased to find that the Electrical and Electronic Engineering Department of the Kathmandu University, which he heads up, had continued to run fairly smoothly in his absence. Hilary's work had not continued so well, however, and the income generating cross-stitch group which she led had come to a complete halt without her. This has clearly demonstrated that the ladies are not yet in a position to take on the work for themselves but Hilary is moving slowly towards this aim by giving certain individuals

specific responsibilities and praying about the way forward.

Please pray:

grow stronger daily.

p for God's guidance over the crossstitch group as the ladies move towards the aim of self-sufficiency. III for the many new members of staff beginning work in Paul's department at the university, many have no previous experience of teaching properties for for continued good health and that Paul in particular will continue to



Expanding Prayer Focus. In this series **BMS** personnel introduce friends and acquaintances whom they meet from day to day

Anun, Baw Kaew, Thailand

Born into a Karen Christian family, Anun lived in an area of Thailand where it was easy to buy drugs, and as he grew up he started drinking, then smoking marijuana. At 15 he went south to find work, and there he started glue-sniffing - and couldn't stop. From there he went on to heroin, a habit he became addicted to, and which cost him between 50 and 100 Thai baht (£1 to £2) a day, which was all he was earning as a daily labourer.

Anun continued going to church. He realised the drugs were controlling his life and he longed to be set free. He heard about the Drug Rehabilitation Centre at Baw Kaew, and despite many questions in his mind as to whether this could really help him, he went to



Baw Kaew. He said how difficult it was to come off heroin, yet all the while his new friends there were always there to help him; there was always someone praying for him.

At Baw Kaew the day started with Bible study. Anun came back to God, re-committing his life to him. His love for God deepened and his faith in him was real. He was baptised at Baw Kaew, and this for him was a sign and an opportunity to witness that his life had changed.

Since then he has studied at the Karen Bible School in Chiang Mai for three years. Now he works as an extension worker at Baw Kaew, leading Bible studies and teaching about agriculture. Most of all he enjoys giving his testimony, challenging the addicts as to what life was like when he was taking drugs, and what it's like now. He says: "I've been completely changed! I couldn't have done it by myself. It is all by God's power."

Anun is now looking forward to getting married and having his own family. Most of all he wants to serve the Lord, and wants God to use him to help other addicts.

Jacqui Wells, BMS worker in Thailand

Anna Eldorado do Sul. Porto Alegre, Brazil

Anna was born in the state of Santa Catarina. She was 22 when she came to Porto Alegre, and she's 57 now. She moved there because her sister had already moved there, and she felt it was a good place



to live. After she arrived she met a man, dated him, and became pregnant. This man did not want to know about the pregnancy, so her mother came and got her, and took her back to Santa Catarina. When Anna's son was six months old, she moved back to Porto Alegre – and this time her whole family came with her. The father of her son tried to find her, but this time she didn't want to know.

She said, - "I was a Catholic then. When they were building the church here (at Eldorado do Sul), they advertised it by putting leaflets in houses, and I decided to go to church then. I used to go to the Catholic church quite a lot but never felt God was touching my heart. The first time I came here I felt God touching my heart. Everything fitted together. It's something I love. This is the church that is right for me. I am at peace."

Her son Santo (Holy) came to church for a while, but then stopped coming, and has gone back to his previous life, making a living from drugs.

In church she sings in the choir and is in charge of the kitchen. Once a month the church has a lunch together, and there are other events involving food. When it was the church anniversary she made a big cake.

Anna comes to every service; she never fails. She's been unemployed for a number of months, having left her previous job looking after children because it got too much for her. Now she is looking for work.

Colin & Marcia Pavitt church pastoral workers with BMS in Porto Alegre, Brazil.

Puri Kathmandu, Nepal

Puri is a peon. On the

hierarchical ladder of Kathmandu University, a peon is on the bottom rung. He makes the tea, does the photo-copying, takes messages and vacuums the laboratories. Puri is a very pleasant young man. He is bright, intelligent, smartly dressed and has an amiable personality. To risk a cliché, he is the sort of young man that you would be pleased to have as a sonin-law. When he brings my tea and I am not too busy, we have a chat about this and that. His English is about as good as my Nepali, but we usually manage some sort of communication and help each other with our language. But due to an accident of birth Puri will probably always be a *peon*. He comes from a small village near the university, and considers himself fortunate to have a job there. The university students are from much better-off families. It is a private university, and, although by western standards the fees are low, they are beyond the reach of most Nepali families - families like Puri's. I often wonder what he really feels about those students - of a similar age and intelligence - but who can afford to study for a degree, while he remains a

Paul & Hilary Drinkwater, BMS workers in Nepal

peon.





bms news

Baptist House News



Welcome to: **Brian English** Brian joins the Communications Department to fill the newly-created position of Marketing Assistant. Brian comes from

Aldershot in Hampshire, and starts his new job fresh from completing a three year degree in Media and Business Studies at Warrington University.

Action Cards

Thank you to all who have taken up the Action card scheme, and have used the information published in mh and elsewhere. However this scheme has not generally had a wide appeal, and so this is the last issue of mb in which these cards will appear. We feel the issues they are concerned with can be better taken up by the BMS Justice and Peace Advisory Group. If you still wish to use them they can be obtained from Christians Aware, 10 Springfield Road, Leicester, LE2 3BD.

BMS Stamp Bureau

David and his team have been working hard throughout the year, sorting more than nine million stamps, weighing a total of 1,300 kg. After trimming, the stamps are then sold or transferred to the Great Britain department, (run by Richard Camp in Telford) or the Foreign and Commonwealth department, (run by Douglas Neilson in Dundee.) Richard sells the stamps by attending stamp fairs, and through lists with stamps being supplied to

The sale of these and other collectables such as coins and cards raised £6,500 for BMS

If you want to know more - about how you can help, contact Rob Vaines at BMS on 01235 517617 for a special leaflet.

IMC Update

We've now had official permission from the Charity Commissioners to go ahead with the purchase of St Andrew's Hall for £850,000. It will now be called BMS International Mission Centre. Completion took place on 31 August 1999.

New Candidates accepted

The following have been accepted to serve with BMS in Nepal: **Rachel Moss** Rebecca Pearce Julie Russell



Rachel is a member of Southcourt Baptist Church, Aylesbury. She became a Christian at the age of seven, and was baptised in Hong Kong in 1993 where she was spending time prior to university, working as a volunteer with missionaries caring for children and adults with disabilities. At university Rachel studied for a psychology degree and then did a PGCE; whilst there, she was very active in the local church and Christian activities, Rachel will teach in Pokhara and will undergo some initial training at Spurgeon's College, and then commence her orientation programme in Nepal in January 2000.



Rebecca's parents were BMS missionaries, serving in Zaire. She became a Christian in 1987 and in 1992 went with a BMS Summer Team to Italy, where she helped repair a children's home. While at university she used her summer holidays to go on Taskforce in Devon where she helped in children's summer clubs and in the evangelistic work

of the church. Rebecca says she's had a strong sense of a missionary call from an early age. She is a nurse, and as the elective part of her university course, she travelled to Nepal to work in Green Pastures Leprosy Hospital. Like Rachel, she too will spend time at Spurgeon's before beginning her orientation programme in Nepal in January 2000. She will take up the position of Clinic manager with INF's Tuberculosis Project.



Julie is also a nurse, having recently completed a course in Tropical Medicine. She has lived in Indonesia, Malaysia, Denmark and Hong Kong, but now counts Swindon as her home! She became a Christian when she was 17, and was later baptised at Upper Stratton Baptist Church, Swindon. She will follow the same training and orientation route as Rachel, and it is envisaged that she too will become a Clinic Manager with INF's Tuberculosis Project.

Coming back for more:



Geoff & Mary Ida Timms From 1994 to 1996 Geoff was a BMS Volunteer with BMS in Albania, engaged in agricultural work and agricultural education when in 1995 he met Mary Ida Buzhardt, a missionary with the Co-operative Baptist Fellowship, based in Atlanta, Georgia. Their work overlapped on complementary projects, with both sending organisations working out of the Baptist Centre in Tirana.

Geoff and Mary Ida married in October 1997, and in September this year they headed back to Albania as a married couple, sent by BMS. Their first three months will have been spent re-learning the Albanian language and then they will be assigned to a particular project.

Both are members of Camberley Baptist Church.

Philip & Vivienne Hatton
Philip and Vivienne
previously served with BMS
in the Congo – Philip from
1979 to 1982, and Vivienne
from 1975 to 1983 – it was
here they met and later
married in 1983. Following
on from this they both had a
sense that one day they
could serve overseas again.

They had a short spell as BMS Volunteers in Kinshasa from November 1996 to April 1997, and this confirmed to them that they should offer themselves for service again.

At present Philip is minister of Wotton-under-Edge Baptist Church, Gloucestershire and Vivienne is a teacher. They have two children, Ruth and Christopher.

Their service with BMS will commence on 1 January 2000 with them working in Belgium as a ministerial couple.



First for Roger!

BMS worker in Albania, Roger Pearce, has long been concerned about how antiquated the text books were for learning the Albanian language. Having an interest in language studies, he decided to write his own guide to learning Albanian.

It takes the form of an A4

book, with lots of photos and illustrations, drawing on real examples of speech used in everyday life. The book comes with a tape to complete the package. It is retailing at £11.00. Interested? Contact Rob Vaines at BMS on 01235 517617.



bms news

lain Gordon in hospital

BMS worker lain Gordon has been fighting for his life in a Singapore Hospital. Based in Kathmandu, involved in development and consulting services, lain had a routine operation on his back, but he then suffered septicaemia and severe pneumonia.

He was airlifted to Singapore, and further complications followed. lain's recovery was prayed for all around the world, and a week after the initial operation doctors were "cautiously optimistic" about lain's recovery. He is continuing to make progress, and at the time of writing is eating normally, and building up his strength.

lain is not out of the woods yet, and several aspects of his condition still give cause for concern.

Please remember lain in your prayers – also his wife Karen and their three sons.

Relief Fund grant for earthquake victims

BMS has sent £25,000 from its Relief Fund to help alleviate the suffering and distress caused by the earthquakes in Turkey. This money is being channelled through Baptist World Aid, who are liaising with other Christian relief organisations and partner agencies to develop an assistance programme.

One such group had set up more than 1,000 tents for victims by early September and distributed supplies like nappies, toilet paper, feminine hygiene products, antiseptics and children's toys. They have also set up a mobile kitchen, and teams of volunteers have been organised to help with medical work. Turkey is a predominantly Muslim country. Protestants are very few – estimates are in the region of 660 national Christians for the whole country plus 2,000 or so foreign Protestants.

Check Out November/December 1999

November

Arrivals

Rosimar & Tim Deller from Goiânia, Brazil

Departures

Anne Roberts to Tirana, Albania

Gerry & Johan Myhill to Curitiba, Brazil

December

Arrivals

Angus & Carol MacNeill from Kachanaburi, Thailand

Caroline & Tim Trimble from Kathmandu, Nepal

Departures

Non

world mission link

world

Every year over 150,000 visitors and 6,000 competitors in various events flock to the biggest and oldest celebration of Welsh culture - the Royal National Eisteddfod.

BMS were there too, in the persons of Nick Bradshaw and Delyth Wyn Davies, BMS Coordinators for Wales. They were sharing a stall with the Baptist Union of Wales, helped by eight students from Georgia and Kentucky who had come to the end of their ten-week placement in Wales with the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board, (a bit like BMS **Action Teams!)**

Nick said, "Despite more than our fair share of rain, it was a marvellous festival. It was a good opportunity to meet all sorts of people and have fun practising my very limited Welsh, having only completed a one-week introductory course. At least I could ask for my pysgod a sglodion - fish and chips!

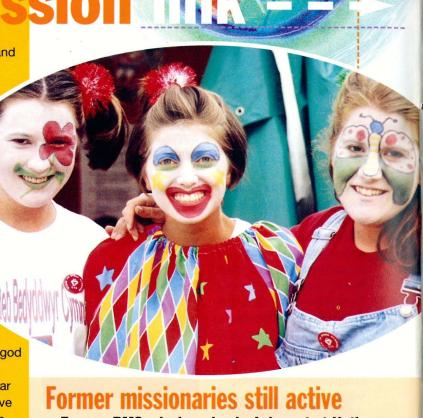
"It's a great opportunity to be involved in a secular festival, and my prayer is that every year we will have more and more to shout about what God is doing in the world."

Over 5,000 people visited the Wye Valley Christian Festival, held at Gorsley, near Ross-on-Wye over the August Bank Holiday period. Having grown out of the now famous Flower Festival, most of the visitors also browsed around the mission stands.

Speakers included Eddie Stobart, Jonathan Lamb, of IFES and Chairman of the Keswick Convention who spoke a "message for today", based on the life of Jeremiah, standing for God in tough times, and BMS General Director, Alistair Brown, unfolding Isaiah's vision of God. The evening concerts - including one by Helen Shapiro - drew 700 to 750 people, and combined teaching, ministry and outreach.

John Lewis, minister of Gorsley Baptist Church, said afterwards, "We've created a platform in which the Word of God has been opened up, and God has blessed it. It was amazing. I've never seen anything like it."

A lot of church groups are already putting next year's Festival, also to be held over the August Bank Holiday, into their diaries. If you would like more information contact Gorsley Baptist Church on 01989 720312.



Former BMS missionaries in Asia met at Hothorpe Hall, Leicestershire, to renew friendships and hear about the ongoing work of mission. They were reminded in the opening address by BMS General Director Alistair Brown that whatever their situation, they were still missionaries, showing and telling of the

love of God. The group met together on the Sunday morning for worship at **Arnesby Baptist** Church, In the afternoon at a communion service they gave a total of

£372 for the BMS Relief Fund.



Betty Marsh has a ward named after her



Vinoth Ramachandra

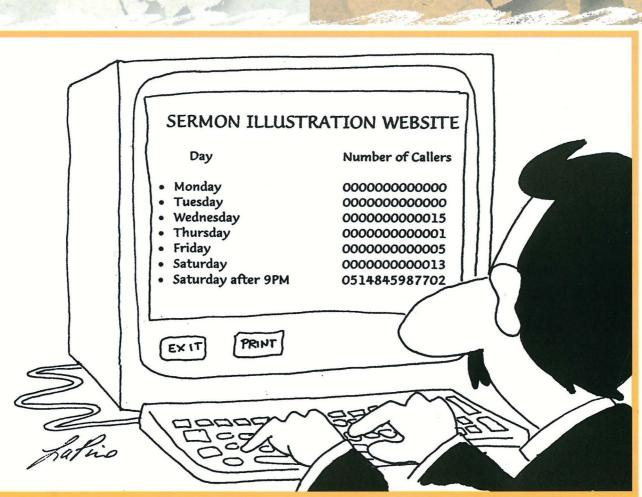
Success the world's way or God's?

At the heart of Jesus' ministry lay a vigorous challenge to the powers of evil, whether in the disease that afflicts the body, the demons that torment the mind, the guilt and indignities that crush the person, or the idolatry and hypocrisy that destroy community. Yet it was a challenge that was made in utter vulnerability. It led to the agony in Gethsemene and the God-forsakenness of Golgotha. The cross itself was his supreme parable, expressing the paradox of his mission. In what seemed total defeat, the victory of God was accomplished. The weakness of God spells the conquest of evil. The crucified victim is the power of God and the wisdom of God (1Cor1:22-3).

Christian mission is not a success story in the way the world reckons success. The outstanding examples of vibrant Christian witness in this century have been in places where success in worldly terms has been denied the Church. For instance, in China, where the Church emerged from the horrors of the cultural revolution and the recent waves of repression, greatly renewed and strengthened; or, in Eastern Europe, where the courage and holiness of Christians kept hope in God alive, despite attempts by powerful governments to stamp it out; or, in Latin America, where countless believers have been imprisoned and killed for resisting tyranny, and where the Church continues to minister out of poverty and weakness.

Ever since the Church's first great conflict with the power of imperial Rome, the victory of the gospel has been won not by the efficiency of its mission strategists, the effectiveness of its fundraisers or even the cleverness of its preachers. But by the blood of its martyrs.

Vinoth Ramachandra is South Asia Regional Secretary of IFES



new for 1999 Christmas cards

This Christmas support BMS and its work by buying BMS cards and calendars. All Christmas cards contain a Christmas greeting and Christian verses unless otherwise stated.

CC14 Fun Angel Size: 116mm x 116mm (one design) £1.65 for 8

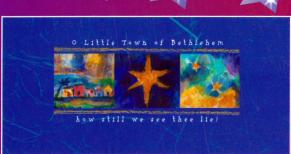


City of David designs) The purple design from this pack is available in Welsh (CC11) £2.25 for 10



CC15 Christmas















CC13 Brazil Dove Exclusive to BMS Hand made cards crafted by women from Fortaleza, Brazil. These cards guarantee further income for the women and their families.

Size: 150mm x 105mm (one design)

(No verse) £3.95 for 5



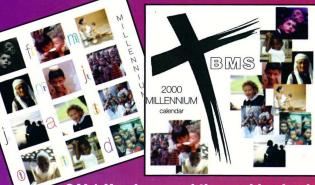
CC12 Star and Shepherds

Exclusive to BMS

Size: 210mm x 104mm (two designs)

£2.25 for 10





CAL1 Hands around the world calendar A vibrant, emotive calendar designed by Carolyn Tabor. Size: 300mm x 300mm **24.99** (Price held from 1998)



BMS

CAL 2 **Engagement** Calendar Wall calendar with beautiful illustrations by Sarah Prentice. Size: 150mm x 370mm £2.99 (Price held from







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